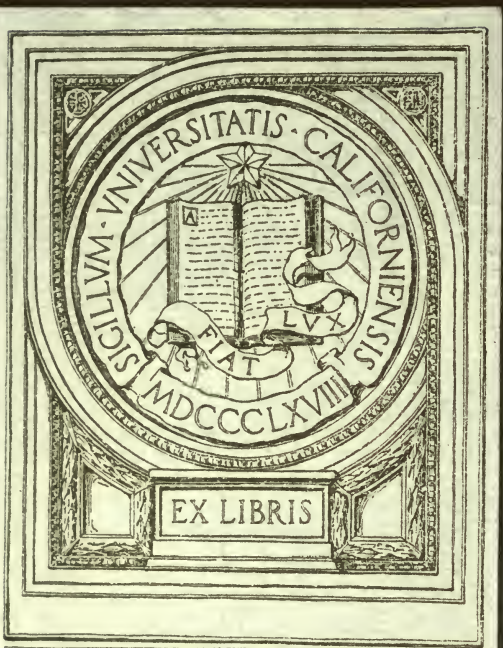

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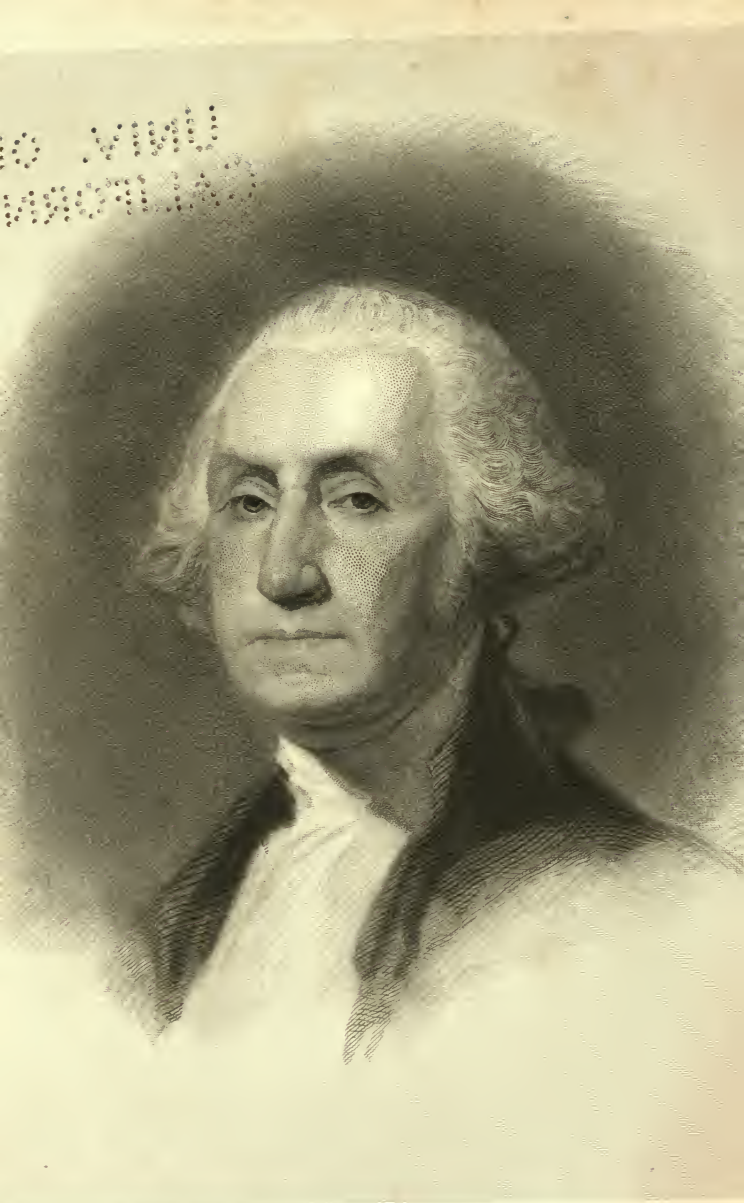
LIFE

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA



From the original Picture in the Boston Athenaeum
taken from life in 1795.

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Martha Washington

LIFE

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.

IN FIVE VOLS.

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* From the original drawing made by Major L'Enfant for the U. S. Army, in 1780.

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

SUFFERINGS OF THE ARMY AT MORRISTOWN—RIGOROUS WINTER—DERANGEMENT OF THE CURRENCY—CONFUSION IN THE COMMISSARIAT—IMPRESSMENT OF SUPPLIES—PATRIOTIC CONDUCT OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW JERSEY—THE BAY OF NEW YORK FROZEN OVER—LORD STIRLING'S EXPEDITION AGAINST STATEN ISLAND—KNYPHAUSEN'S INCURSION INTO THE JERSEYS—CALDWELL'S CHURCH AT ELIZABETHTOWN BURNT—CHARACTER OF ITS PASTOR—FORAY INTO WESTCHESTER COUNTY—BURNING OF YOUNG'S HOUSE IN THE VALLEY OF THE NEPERAN.

The dreary encampment at Valley Forge has become proverbial for its hardships; yet they were scarcely more severe than those suffered by Washington's army during the present winter, while hutted among the heights of Morristown. The winter set in early, and was uncommonly rigorous. The transportation of supplies was obstructed; the magazines were exhausted, and the commissaries had neither money nor credit to enable them to replenish them. For weeks at a time the army was on half allowance; sometimes without meat, sometimes without bread, sometimes without both. There was a scarcity, too, of clothing and blankets, so that the poor soldiers were starving with cold as well as hunger.

Washington wrote to President Reed of Pennsylvania, entreating aid and supplies from that State to keep his army from disbanding. "We have never," said he, "experienced a like extremity at any period of the war." *

The year 1780 opened upon a famishing camp. "For a fortnight past," writes Washington, on the 8th of January, "the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing with want. Yet," adds he, feelingly, "they have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation, and ought to excite the sympathies, of their countrymen."

The severest trials of the Revolution, in fact, were not in the field, where there were shouts to excite and laurels to be won; but in the squalid wretchedness of ill-provided camps, where there was nothing to cheer and every thing to be endured. To suffer was the lot of the revolutionary soldier.

A rigorous winter had much to do with the actual distresses of the army, but the root of the evil lay in the derangement of the currency. Congress had commenced the war without adequate funds, and without the power of imposing direct taxes. To meet pressing emergencies, it had emitted paper money, which, for a time, passed currently at par; but sank in value as further emissions succeeded, and that, already in circulation, remained unredeemed. The several States added to the evil by emitting paper in their separate capacities: thus the country gradually became flooded with a "continental currency," as it was called; irredeemable, and of no intrinsic value. The consequence was a general derangement of trade and finance. The continental currency declined to such a degree, that forty dollars in paper were equivalent to only one in specie.

* Life of Reed, ii. 189.

Congress attempted to put a stop to this depreciation, by making paper money a legal tender, at its nominal value, in the discharge of debts, however contracted. This opened the door to knavery, and added a new feature to the evil.

The commissaries now found it difficult to purchase supplies for the immediate wants of the army, and impossible to provide any stores in advance. They were left destitute of funds, and the public credit was prostrated by the accumulating debts suffered to remain uncancelled. The changes which had taken place in the commissary department added to this confusion. The commissary-general, instead of receiving, as heretofore, a commission on expenditures, was to have a fixed salary in paper currency; and his deputies were to be compensated in like manner, without the usual allowance of rations and forage. No competent agents could be procured on such terms; and the derangement produced throughout the department compelled Colonel Wadsworth, the able and upright commissary-general, to resign.

In the present emergency Washington was reluctantly compelled, by the distresses of the army, to call upon the counties of the State for supplies of grain and cattle, proportioned to their respective abilities. These supplies were to be brought into the camp within a certain time; the grain to be measured and the cattle estimated by any two of the magistrates of the county in conjunction with the commissary, and certificates to be given by the latter, specifying the quantity of each and the terms of payment.

Wherever a compliance with this call was refused, the articles required were to be impressed: it was a painful alternative, yet nothing else could save the army from dissolution or starving. Washington charged his officers to act with as much ten-

derness as possible, graduating the exaction according to the stock of each individual, so that no family should be deprived of what was necessary to its subsistence. "While your measures are adapted to the emergency," writes he to Colonel Matthias Ogden, "and you consult what you owe to the service, I am persuaded you will not forget that, as we are compelled by necessity to take the property of citizens for the support of an army on which their safety depends, we should be careful to manifest that we have a reverence for their rights, and wish not to do any thing which that necessity, and even their own good, do not absolutely require."

To the honor of the magistrates and the people of Jersey, Washington testifies that his requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many counties exceeded. Too much praise, indeed, cannot be given to the people of this State for the patience with which most of them bore these exactions, and the patriotism with which many of them administered to the wants of their countrymen in arms. Exhausted as the State was by repeated drainings, yet, at one time, when deep snows cut off all distant supplies, Washington's army was wholly subsisted by it. "Provisions came in with hearty good will from the farmers in Mendham, Chatham, Hanover, and other rural places, together with stockings, shoes, coats, and blankets; while the women met together to knit and sew for the soldiery." *

* From manuscript notes by the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle. This worthy clergyman gives many anecdotes illustrative of the active patriotism of the Jersey women. Anna Kitchel, wife of a farmer of Whippany, is repeatedly his theme of well-merited eulogium. Her potato bin, meal bag and granary, writes he, had always some comfort for the patriot soldiers. When unable to billet them in her house, a huge kettle filled with meat and vegetables was hung over the fire, that they might not go away hungry.

As the winter advanced, the cold increased in severity. It was the most intense ever remembered in the country. The great bay of New York was frozen over. No supplies could come to the city by water. Provisions grew scanty; and there was such lack of firewood, that old transports were broken up, and uninhabited wooden houses pulled down for fuel. The safety of the city was endangered. The ships of war, immovably ice-bound in its harbor, no longer gave it protection. The insular security of the place was at an end. An army with its heaviest artillery and baggage might cross the Hudson on the ice. The veteran Knyphausen began to apprehend an invasion, and took measures accordingly; the seamen of the ships and transports were landed and formed into companies, and the inhabitants of the city were embodied, officered, and subjected to garrison duty.

Washington was aware of the opportunity which offered itself for a signal *coup de main*, but was not in a condition to profit by it. His troops, hutted among the heights of Morristown, were half fed, half clothed, and inferior in number to the garrison of New York. He was destitute of funds necessary to fit them for the enterprise, and the quartermaster could not furnish means of transportation.

Still, in the frozen condition of the bay and rivers, some minor blow might be attempted, sufficient to rouse and cheer the spirits of the people. With this view, having ascertained that the ice formed a bridge across the strait between the Jersey shore and Staten Island, he projected a descent upon the latter by Lord Stirling with twenty-five hundred men, to surprise and capture a British force of ten or twelve hundred.

His lordship crossed on the night of the 14th of January, from De Hart's Point to the island. His approach was discov-

ered; the troops took refuge in the works, which were too strongly situated to be attacked; a channel remaining open through the ice across the bay, a boat was despatched to New York for reinforcements.

The projected surprise having thus proved a complete failure, and his own situation becoming hazardous, Lord Stirling recrossed to the Jersey shore with a number of prisoners whom he had captured. He was pursued by a party of cavalry, which he repulsed, and effected a retreat to Elizabethtown. Some few stragglers fell into the hands of the enemy, and many of his men were severely frostbitten.

By way of retort, Knyphausen, on the 25th of January, sent out two detachments to harass the American outposts. One crossed to Paulus Hook, and being joined by part of the garrison of that post, pushed on to Newark, surprised and captured a company stationed there, set fire to the academy, and returned without loss.

The other detachment, consisting of one hundred dragoons and between three and four hundred infantry, under Lieutenant-colonel Boskirk, crossed from Staten Island to Trembly's Point, surprised the picket-guard at Elizabethtown, and captured two majors, two captains, and forty-two privates. This, likewise, was effected without loss. The disgraceful part of the expedition was the burning of the town house, a church, and a private residence, and the plundering of the inhabitants.

The church destroyed was a Presbyterian place of worship, and its pastor, the Rev. James Caldwell, had rendered himself an especial object of hostility to both Briton and tory. He was a zealous patriot; had served as chaplain to those portions of the American army that successively occupied the Jerseys; and now

officiated in that capacity in Colonel Elias Dayton's regiment, beside occasionally acting as commissary. His church had at times served as hospital to the American soldier; or shelter to the hastily assembled militia. Its bell was the tocsin of alarm; from its pulpit he had many a time stirred up the patriotism of his countrymen by his ardent, eloquent, and pathetic appeals, laying beside him his pistols before he commenced. His popularity in the army, and among the Jersey people, was unbounded. He was termed by his friends a "rousing gospel preacher," and by the enemy a "frantic priest" and a "rebel fire-brand." On the present occasion, his church was set on fire by a virulent tory of the neighborhood, who, as he saw it wrapped in flames, "regretted that the black-coated rebel, Caldwell, was not in his pulpit." We shall have occasion to speak of the fortunes of this pastor and his family hereafter.

Another noted maraud during Knyphausen's military sway, was in the lower part of Westchester County, in a hilly region lying between the British and American lines, which had been the scene of part of the past year's campaign. Being often foraged, its inhabitants had become belligerent in their habits, and quick to retaliate on all marauders.

In this region, about twenty miles from the British outposts, and not far from White Plains, the Americans had established a post of three hundred men at a stone building commonly known as Young's house, from the name of its owner. It commanded a road which passed from north to south down along the narrow but fertile valley of the Sawmill River, now known by its original Indian name of the Neperan. On this road the garrison of Young's house kept a vigilant eye, to intercept the convoys of cattle and provisions which had been collected or plundered by

the enemy, and which passed down this valley toward New York. This post had long been an annoyance to the enemy, but its distance from the British lines had hitherto saved it from attack. The country now was covered with snow; troops could be rapidly transported on sleighs; and it was determined that Young's house should be surprised, and this rebel nest broken up.

On the evening of the 2d of February, an expedition set out for the purpose from King's Bridge, led by Lieutenant-colonel Norton, and consisting of four flank companies of guards, two companies of Hessians, and a party of Yagers, all in sleighs; beside a body of Yager cavalry, and a number of mounted Westchester refugees, with two three-pounders.

The snow, being newly fallen, was deep; the sleighs broke their way through it with difficulty. The troops at length abandoned them and pushed forward on foot. The cannon were left behind for the same reason. It was a weary tramp; the snow in many places was more than two feet deep, and they had to take by-ways and cross-roads to avoid the American patrols.

The sun rose while they were yet seven miles from Young's house. To surprise the post was out of the question; still they kept on. Before they could reach the house the country had taken the alarm, and the Westchester yeomanry had armed themselves, and were hastening to aid the garrison.

The British light infantry and grenadiers invested the mansion; the cavalry posted themselves on a neighboring eminence, to prevent retreat or reinforcement, and the house was assailed. It made a brave resistance, and was aided by some of the yeomanry stationed in an adjacent orchard. The garrison, however, was overpowered; numbers were killed, and ninety taken prisoners. The house was sacked and set in flames; and thus, having

broken up this stronghold of the country, the party hastened to effect a safe return to the lines with their prisoners, some of whom were so badly wounded that they had to be left at different farm-houses on the road. The detachment reached King's Bridge by nine o'clock the same evening, and boasted that, in this enterprise, they had sustained no other loss than two killed and twenty-three wounded.

Of the prisoners many were doubtless farmers and farmers' sons, who had turned out in defence of their homes, and were now to be transferred to the horrors of the jail and sugar-house in New York. We give this affair as a specimen of the *petite guerre* carried on in the southern part of Westchester County; the NEUTRAL GROUND, as it was called, but subjected from its vicinity to the city, to be foraged by the royal forces, and plundered and insulted by refugees and tories. No part of the Union was more harried and trampled down by friend and foe, during the Revolution, than this debatable region and the Jerseys.

CHAPTER II.

ARNOLD IN COMMAND OF PHILADELPHIA—UNPOPULAR MEASURES—ARNOLD'S STYLE OF LIVING—HIS SCHEMES AND SPECULATIONS—HIS COLLISIONS WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL—HIS LAND PROJECT—CHARGES SENT AGAINST HIM TO CONGRESS—HIS ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC—CHARGES REFERRED TO A COURT-MARTIAL—HIS MARRIAGE—VERDICT OF THE COURT-MARTIAL—ARNOLD REPRIMANDED—OBTAINS LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE ARMY.

The most irksome duty that Washington had to perform during this winter's encampment at Morristown, regarded General Arnold and his military government of Philadelphia in 1778. To explain it requires a glance back to that period.

At the time of entering upon this command, Arnold's accounts with government were yet unsettled; the committee appointed by Congress, at his own request, to examine them, having considered some of his charges dubious, and others exorbitant. Washington, however, still looked upon him with favor, and, but a month previously, had presented him with a pair of epaulettes and a sword-knot, "as a testimony of his sincere regard and approbation."

The command of Philadelphia, at this time, was a delicate and difficult one, and required to be exercised with extreme circumspection. The boundaries between the powers vested in the military commander, and those inherent in the State government,

were ill defined. Disaffection to the American cause prevailed both among the permanent and casual residents, and required to be held in check with firmness but toleration. By a resolve of Congress, no goods, wares, or merchandise were to be removed, transferred, or sold, until the ownership of them could be ascertained by a joint committee of Congress and of the Council of Pennsylvania; any public stores belonging to the enemy were to be seized and converted to the use of the army.

Washington, in his letter of instructions, left it to Arnold's discretion to adopt such measures as should appear to him most effectual and least offensive in executing this resolve of Congress; in which he was to be aided by an assistant quartermaster-general, subject to his directions. "You will take every prudent step in your power," writes Washington, "to preserve tranquillity and order in the city, and give security to individuals of every class and description, restraining, as far as possible, till the restoration of civil government, every species of persecution, insult or abuse, either from the soldiery to the inhabitants, or among each other."

One of Arnold's first measures was to issue a proclamation enforcing the resolve of Congress. In so doing, he was countenanced by leading personages of Philadelphia, and the proclamation was drafted by General Joseph Reed. The measure excited great dissatisfaction, and circumstances attending the enforcement of it gave rise to scandal. Former instances of a mercenary spirit made Arnold liable to suspicions, and it was alleged that, while by the proclamation he shut up the stores and shops so that even the officers of the army could not procure necessary articles of merchandise, he was privately making large purchases for his own enrichment.

His style of living gave point to this scandal. He occupied one of the finest houses in the city; set up a splendid establishment; had his carriage and four horses and a train of domestics; gave expensive entertainments, and indulged in a luxury and parade, which were condemned as little befitting a republican general; especially one whose accounts with government were yet unsettled, and who had imputations of mercenary rapacity still hanging over him.

Ostentatious prodigality, in fact, was Arnold's besetting sin. To cope with his overwhelming expenses, he engaged in various speculations, more befitting the trafficking habits of his early life than his present elevated position. Nay, he availed himself of that position to aid his speculations, and sometimes made temporary use of the public moneys passing through his hands. In his impatience to be rich, he at one time thought of taking command of a privateer, and making lucrative captures at sea.

In the exercise of his military functions, he had become involved in disputes with the president (Wharton) and executive council of Pennsylvania, and by his conduct, which was deemed arbitrary and arrogant, had drawn upon himself the hostility of that body, which became stern and unsparing censors of his conduct.

He had not been many weeks in Philadelphia before he became attached to one of its reigning belles, Miss Margaret Shippen, daughter of Mr. Edward Shippen, in after years chief justice of Pennsylvania. Her family were not considered well affected to the American cause; the young lady herself, during the occupation of the city by the enemy, had been a "toast" among the British officers, and selected as one of the beauties of the Mischianza.

Arnold paid his addresses in an open and honorable style, first obtaining by letter the sanction of the father. Party feeling at that time ran high in Philadelphia on local subjects connected with the change of the State government. Arnold's connection with the Shippen family increased his disfavor with the president and executive council, who were whigs to a man; and it was sneeringly observed, that "he had courted the loyalists from the start."

General Joseph Reed, at that time one of the executive committee, observes in a letter to General Greene, "Will you not think it extraordinary that General Arnold made a public entertainment the night before last, of which, not only common tory ladies, but the wives and daughters of persons proscribed by the State, and now with the enemy at New York, formed a very considerable number? The fact is literally true."

Regarded from a different point of view, this conduct might have been attributed to the courtesy of a gallant soldier; who scorned to carry the animosity of the field into the drawing-room; or to proscribe and persecute the wives and daughters of political exiles.

In the beginning of December, General Reed became president of the executive council of Pennsylvania, and under his administration the ripening hostility to Arnold was brought to a crisis. Among the various schemes of the latter for bettering his fortunes, and securing the means of living when the war should come to an end, was one for forming a settlement in the western part of the State of New York, to be composed, principally, of the officers and soldiers who had served under him. His scheme was approved by Mr. John Jay, the pure-minded patriot of New York, at that time President of Congress, and was sanctioned by

the New York delegation. Provided with letters from them, Arnold left Philadelphia about the 1st of January (1779), and set out for Albany to obtain a grant of land for the purpose, from the New York Legislature.

Within a day or two after his departure, his public conduct was discussed in the executive council of Pennsylvania, and it was resolved unanimously, that the course of his military command in the city had been in many respects oppressive, unworthy of his rank and station, and highly discouraging to the liberties and interests of America, and disrespectful to the supreme executive authority of the State.

As he was an officer of the United States, the complaints and grievances of Pennsylvania were set forth by the executive council in eight charges, and forwarded to Congress, accompanied by documents, and a letter from President Reed.

Information of these facts, with a printed copy of the charges, reached Arnold at Washington's camp on the Raritan, which he had visited while on the way to Albany. His first solicitude was about the effect they might have upon Miss Shippen, to whom he was now engaged. In a letter dated February 8th, he entreated her not to suffer these rude attacks on him to give her a moment's uneasiness—they could do him no injury.

On the following day he issued an address to the public, recalling his faithful services of nearly four years, and inveighing against the proceedings of the president and council; who, not content with injuring him in a cruel and unprecedented manner with Congress, had ordered copies of their charges to be printed and dispersed throughout the several States, for the purpose of prejudicing the public mind against him, while the matter was yet in suspense. "Their conduct," writes he, "appears the more

cruel and malicious, in making the charges after I had left the city; as my intention of leaving the city was known for five weeks before." This complaint, we must observe, was rebutted, on their part, by the assertion that, at the time of his departure, he knew of the accusation that was impending.

In conclusion, Arnold informed the public that he had requested Congress to direct a court-martial to inquire into his conduct, and trusted his countrymen would suspend their judgment in the matter, until he should have an opportunity of being heard.

Public opinion was divided. His brilliant services spoke eloquently in his favor. His admirers repined that a fame won by such daring exploits on the field should be stifled down by cold calumnies in Philadelphia; and many thought, dispassionately, that the State authorities had acted with excessive harshness towards a meritorious officer, in widely spreading their charges against him, and thus, in an unprecedented way, putting a public brand upon him.

On the 16th of February, Arnold's appeal to Congress was referred to the committee which had under consideration the letter of President Reed and its accompanying documents, and it was charged to make a report with all convenient despatch. A motion was made to suspend Arnold from all command during the inquiry. To the credit of Congress it was negatived.

Much contrariety of feeling prevailed on the subject in the committee of Congress and the executive council of Pennsylvania, and the correspondence between those legislative bodies was occasionally tinctured with needless acrimony.

Arnold, in the course of January, had obtained permission from Washington to resign the command of Philadelphia, but

deferred to act upon it, until the charges against him should be examined, lest, as he said, his enemies should misinterpret his motives, and ascribe his resignation to fear of a disgraceful suspension in consequence of those charges.

About the middle of March, the committee brought in a report exculpating him from all criminality in the matters charged against him. As soon as the report was brought in, he considered his name vindicated, and resigned.

Whatever exultation he may have felt was short-lived. Congress did not call up and act upon the report, as, in justice to him, they should have done, whether to sanction it or not; but referred the subject anew to a joint committee of their body and the assembly and council of Pennsylvania. Arnold was, at this time, on the eve of marriage with Miss Shippen, and, thus circumstanced, it must have been peculiarly galling to his pride to be kept under the odium of imputed delinquencies.

The report of the joint committee brought up animated discussions in Congress. Several resolutions recommended by the committee were merely of a formal nature, and intended to soothe the wounded sensibilities of Pennsylvania; these were passed without dissent; but it was contended that certain charges advanced by the executive council of that State were only cognizable by a court-martial, and, after a warm debate, it was resolved (April 3d), by a large majority, that the commander-in-chief should appoint such a court for the consideration of them.

Arnold inveighed bitterly against the injustice of subjecting him to a trial before a military tribunal for alleged offences of which he had been acquitted by the committee of Congress. He was sacrificed, he said, to avoid a breach with Pennsylvania. In a letter to Washington, he charged it all to the hostility of Presi-

dent Reed, who, he affirmed, had by his address, kept the affair in suspense for two months, and at last obtained the resolution of Congress directing the court-martial. He urged Washington to appoint a speedy day for the trial, that he might not linger under the odium of an unjust public accusation. "I have no doubt of obtaining justice from a court-martial," writes he, "as every officer in the army must feel himself injured by the cruel and unprecedented treatment I have met with. * * * * When your Excellency considers my sufferings, and the cruel situation I am in, your own humanity and feeling as a soldier will render every thing I can say further on the subject unnecessary."

It was doubtless soothing to his irritated pride, that the woman on whom he had placed his affections remained true to him; for his marriage with Miss Shippen took place just five days after the mortifying vote of Congress.

Washington sympathized with Arnold's impatience, and appointed the 1st of May for the trial, but it was repeatedly postponed; first, at the request of the Pennsylvania council, to allow time for the arrival of witnesses from the South; afterwards, in consequence of threatening movements of the enemy, which obliged every officer to be at his post. Arnold, in the mean time, continued to reside at Philadelphia, holding his commission in the army, but filling no public office; getting deeper and deeper in debt, and becoming more and more unpopular.

Having once been attacked in the street in the course of some popular tumult, he affected to consider his life in danger, and applied to Congress for a guard of Continental soldiers, "as no protection was to be expected from the authority of the State for an honest man."

He was told in reply, that his application ought to have been

made to the executive authority of Pennsylvania; "in whose disposition to protect every honest citizen, Congress had full confidence, *and highly disapproved the insinuation of every individual to the contrary.*"

For months, Arnold remained in this anxious and irritated state. His situation, he said, was cruel. His character would continue to suffer until he should be acquitted by a court-martial, and he would be effectually prevented from joining the army, which he wished to do as soon as his wounds would permit, that he might render the country every service in his power in this critical time. "For though I have been ungratefully treated," adds he, "I do not consider it as from my countrymen in general, but from a set of men, who, void of principle, are governed entirely by private interest."

At length, when the campaign was over, and the army had gone into winter-quarters, the long-delayed court-martial was assembled at Morristown. Of the eight charges originally advanced against Arnold by the Pennsylvania council, four only came under cognizance of the court. Of two of these he was entirely acquitted. The remaining two were,

First. That while in the camp at Valley Forge, he, without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, or the sanction of the State government, had granted a written permission for a vessel belonging to disaffected persons, to proceed from the port of Philadelphia, then in possession of the enemy, to any port of the United States.

Second. That, availing himself of his official authority, he had appropriated the public waggons of Pennsylvania, when called forth on a special emergency, to the transportation of private property, and that of persons who voluntarily remained with

the enemy, and were deemed disaffected to the interests and independence of America.

In regard to the first of these charges, Arnold alleged that the person who applied for the protection of the vessel, had taken the oath of allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania required by the laws; that he was not residing in Philadelphia at the time, but had applied on behalf of himself and a company, and that the intentions of that person and his associates with regard to the vessel and cargo appeared to be upright.

As to his having granted the permission without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, though present in the camp, Arnold alleged that it was customary in the army for general officers to grant passes and protections to inhabitants of the United States, friendly to the same, and that the protection was given in the present instance, to prevent the soldiery from plundering the vessel and cargo, coming from a place in possession of the enemy, until the proper authority could take cognizance of the matter.

In regard to the second charge, while it was proved that under his authority public waggons had been so used, it was allowed in extenuation, that they had been employed at private expense, and without any design to defraud the public or impede the military service.

In regard to both charges, nothing fraudulent on the part of Arnold was proved, but the transactions involved in the first were pronounced irregular, and contrary to one of the articles of war; and in the second, imprudent and reprehensible, considering the high station occupied by the general at the time, and the court sentenced him to be reprimanded by the commander-in-chief. The sentence was confirmed by Congress on the 12th of February (1780).

We have forborne to go into all the particulars of this trial, but we have considered them attentively, discharging from our minds, as much as possible, all impressions produced by Arnold's subsequent history, and we are surprised to find, after the hostility manifested against him by the council of Pennsylvania, and their extraordinary measure to possess the public mind, against him, how venial are the trespasses of which he stood convicted.

He may have given personal offence by his assuming vanity; by the arrogant exercise of his military authority; he may have displeased by his ostentation, and awakened distrust by his speculating propensities; but as yet his patriotism was unquestioned. No turpitude had been proved against him; his brilliant exploits shed a splendor round his name, and he appeared before the public, a soldier crippled in their service. All these should have pleaded in his favor, should have produced indulgence of his errors, and mitigated that animosity which he always contended had been the cause of his ruin.

The reprimand adjudged by the court-martial was administered by Washington with consummate delicacy. The following were his words, as repeated by M. de Marbois, the French secretary of legation:

"Our profession is the chastest of all: even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the lustre of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of the public favor, so hard to be acquired. I reprehend you for having forgotten, that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself formidable to our enemies, you should have been guarded and temperate in your deportment towards your fellow-citizens.

"Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you

on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, as far as it may be in my power, with opportunities of regaining the esteem of your country."

A reprimand so mild and considerate, accompanied by such high eulogiums and generous promises, might have had a favorable effect upon Arnold, had he been in a different frame of mind; but he had persuaded himself that the court would incline in his favor and acquit him altogether; and he resented deeply a sentence, which he protested against as unmerited. His resentment was aggravated by delays in the settlement of his accounts, as he depended upon the sums he claimed as due to him, for the payment of debts by which he was harassed. In following the matter up, he became a weary, and probably irritable, applicant at the halls of Congress, and, we are told, gave great offence to members by his importunity, while he wore out the patience of his friends; but public bodies are prone to be offended by the importunity of baffled claimants, and the patience of friends is seldom proof against the reiterated story of a man's prolonged difficulties.

In the month of March, we find him intent on a new and adventurous project. He had proposed to the Board of Admiralty an expedition, requiring several ships of war and three or four hundred land troops, offering to take command of it should it be carried into effect, as his wounds still disabled him from duty on land. Washington, who knew his abilities in either service, was disposed to favor his proposition, but the scheme fell through from the impossibility of sparing the requisite number of men from the army. What Arnold's ultimate designs might have been in seeking such a command, are rendered problematical by his subsequent conduct. On the failure of the project, he

requested and obtained from Washington leave of absence from the army for the summer, there being, he said, little prospect of an active campaign, and his wounds unfitting him for the field.

CHAPTER III.

SOUTH CAROLINA THREATENED—ITS CONDITION AND POPULATION—STORMY VOYAGE OF SIR HENRY CLINTON—LOSS OF HORSES—CHARACTER OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TARLETON—FLEET ARRIVES AT TYBEE—SIR HENRY CLINTON ADVANCES UPON CHARLESTON—LINCOLN PREPARES FOR DEFENCE—COMMODORE WHIPPLE—GOVERNOR RUTLEDGE—FOREBODINGS OF WASHINGTON—EMBARKATION OF BRITISH TROOPS AT NEW YORK—WASHINGTON SENDS DE KALB WITH REINFORCEMENTS—HIS HOPEFUL LETTER TO STEUBEN.

THE return of spring brought little alleviation to the sufferings of the army at Morristown. All means of supplying its wants or recruiting its ranks were paralyzed by the continued depreciation of the currency. While Washington saw his forces gradually diminishing, his solicitude was intensely excited for the safety of the Southern States. The reader will recall the departure from New York, in the latter part of December, of the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot with the army of Sir Henry Clinton, destined for the subjugation of South Carolina. "The richness of the country," says Colonel Tarleton, in his history of the campaign, "its vicinity to Georgia, and its distance from General Washington, pointed out the advantage and facility of its conquest. While it would be an unspeakable loss to the Americans, the possession of it would tend to secure to the crown the southern part of the continent which stretches beyond it." It was pre-

sumed that the subjugation of it would be an easy task. The population was scanty for the extent of the country, and was made up of emigrants, or the descendants of emigrants, from various lands and of various nations: Huguenots, who had emigrated from France after the revocation of the edict of Nantz; Germans, from the Palatinate; Irish Protestants, who had received grants of land from the crown; Scotch Highlanders, transported hither after the disastrous battle of Culloden; Dutch colonists, who had left New York, after its submission to England, and been settled here on bounty lands.

Some of these foreign elements might be hostile to British domination, but others would be favorable. There was a large class, too, that had been born or had passed much of their lives in England, who retained for it a filial affection, spoke of it as *home*, and sent their children to be educated there.

The number of slaves within the province and of savages on its western frontier, together with its wide extent of unprotected sea-coast, were encouragements to an invasion by sea and land. Little combination of militia and yeomanry need be apprehended from a population sparsely scattered, and where the settlements were widely separated by swamps and forests. Washington was in no condition to render prompt and effectual relief, his army being at a vast distance, and considered as "in a great measure broken up." The British, on the contrary, had the advantage of their naval force, "there being nothing then in the American seas which could even venture to look at it." *

Such were some of the considerations which prompted the enemy to this expedition; and which gave Washington great anxiety concerning it.

* Ann. Register 1780, p. 217.

General Lincoln was in command at Charleston, but uncertain as yet of the designs of the enemy, and at a loss what course to pursue. Diffident of himself, and accustomed to defer to the wisdom of Washington, he turns to him in his present perplexity. "It is among my misfortunes," writes he, modestly (Jan. 23d), "that I am not near enough to your Excellency to have the advantage of your advice and direction. I feel my own insufficiency and want of experience. I can promise you nothing but a disposition to serve my country. If this town should be attacked, as now threatened, I know my duty will call me to defend it, as long as opposition can be of any avail. I hope my inclination will coincide with my duty."

The voyage of Sir Henry Clinton proved long and tempestuous. The ships were dispersed. Several fell into the hands of the Americans. One ordnance vessel foundered. Most of the artillery horses, and all those of the cavalry perished. The scattered ships rejoined each other about the end of January, at Tybee Bay on Savannah River; where those that had sustained damage were repaired as speedily as possible. The loss of the cavalry horses was especially felt by Sir Henry. There was a corps of two hundred and fifty dragoons, on which he depended greatly in the kind of guerilla warfare he was likely to pursue, in a country of forests and morasses. Lieutenant-colonel Banastre Tarleton, who commanded them, was one of those dogs of war, which Sir Henry was prepared to let slip on emergencies, to scour and maraud the country. This "bold dragoon," so noted in Southern warfare, was about twenty-six years of age, of a swarthy complexion, with small, black, piercing eyes. He is described as being rather below the middle size, square-built and strong, "with large muscular legs." It will be found that he was a

first-rate partisan officer, prompt, ardent, active, but somewhat unscrupulous.

Landing from the fleet, perfectly dismounted, he repaired with his dragoons, in some of the quartermaster's boats, to Port Royal Island, on the seaboard of South Carolina, "to collect at that place, from friends or enemies, by money or by force, all the horses belonging to the islands in the neighborhood." He succeeded in procuring horses, though of an inferior quality to those he had lost, but consoled himself with the persuasion that he would secure better ones in the course of the campaign, by "exertion and enterprise,"—a vague phrase, but very significant in the partisan vocabulary.

In the mean time, the transports having on board a great part of the army, sailed under convoy on the 10th of February, from Savannah to North Edisto Sound, where the troops disembarked on the 11th, on St. Johns Island, about thirty miles below Charleston. Thence, Sir Henry Clinton set out for the banks of Ashley River opposite to the city, while a part of the fleet proceeded round by sea, for the purpose of blockading the harbor. The advance of Sir Henry was slow and cautious. Much time was consumed by him in fortifying intermediate ports, to keep up a secure communication with the fleet. He ordered from Savannah all the troops that could be spared, and wrote to Knyphausen, at New York, for reinforcements from that place. Every precaution was taken by him to insure against a second repulse from before Charleston, which might prove fatal to his military reputation.

General Lincoln took advantage of this slowness on the part of his assailant, to extend and strengthen the works. Charleston stands at the end of an isthmus formed by the Ashley and

Cooper Rivers. Beyond the main works on the land side he cut a canal, from one to the other of the swamps which border these rivers. In advance of the canal were two rows of abatis and a double picketed ditch. Within the canal, and between it and the main works, were strong redoubts and batteries, to open a flanking fire on any approaching column, while an inclosed horn-work of masonry formed a kind of citadel.

A squadron, commanded by Commodore Whipple, and composed of nine vessels of war of various sizes, the largest mounting forty-four guns, was to co-operate with Forts Moultrie and Johnston, and the various batteries, in the defence of the harbor. They were to lie before the bar so as to command the entrance of it. Great reliance also was placed on the bar itself, which it was thought no ship-of-the-line could pass.

Governor Rutledge, a man eminent for talents, patriotism, firmness, and decision, was clothed with dictatorial powers during the present crisis; he had called out the militia of the State, and it was supposed they would duly obey the call. Large reinforcements of troops also were expected from the North. Under all these circumstances, General Lincoln yielded to the entreaties of the inhabitants, and, instead of remaining with his army in the open country, as he had intended, shut himself up with them in the place for its defence, leaving merely his cavalry and two hundred light troops outside, who were to hover about the enemy and prevent small parties from marauding.

It was not until the 12th of March that Sir Henry Clinton effected his tardy approach, and took up a position on Charleston Neck, a few miles above the town. Admiral Arbuthnot soon showed an intention of introducing his ships into the harbor; barricading their waists, anchoring them in a situation where

they might take advantage of the first favorable spring-tide, and fixing buoys on the bar for their guidance. Commodore Whipple had by this time ascertained by sounding, that a wrong idea had prevailed of the depth of water in the harbor, and that his ships could not anchor nearer than within three miles of the bar, so that it would be impossible for him to defend the passage of it He quitted his station within it, therefore, after having destroyed a part of the enemy's buoys, and took a position where his ships might be abreast, and form a cross-fire with the batteries of Fort Moultrie, where Colonel Pinckney commanded.

Washington was informed of these facts, by letters from his former aid-de-camp, Colonel Laurens, who was in Charleston at the time. The information caused anxious forebodings. "The impracticability of defending the bar, I fear, amounts to the loss of the town and garrison," writes he in reply. "It really appears to me, that the propriety of attempting to defend the town, depended on the probability of defending the bar, and that when this ceased, the attempt ought to have been relinquished." The same opinion was expressed by him in a letter to Baron Steuben; "but at this distance," adds he considerately, "we can form a very imperfect judgment of its propriety or necessity. I have the greatest reliance in General Lincoln's prudence, but I cannot forbear dreading the event."

His solicitude for the safety of the South was increased, by hearing of the embarkation at New York of two thousand five hundred British and Hessian troops, under Lord Rawdon, reinforcements for Sir Henry Clinton. It seemed evident the enemy intended to push their operations with vigor at the South; perhaps, to make it the principal theatre of the war. "We are now beginning," said Washington, "to experience the fatal conse-

quences of the policy which delayed calling upon the States for their quotas of men in time to arrange and prepare them for the duties of the field. What to do for the Southern States, without involving consequences equally alarming in this quarter, I know not."

Gladly would he have hastened to the South in person, but at this moment his utmost vigilance was required to keep watch upon New York and maintain the security of the Hudson, the vital part of the confederacy. The weak state of the American means of warfare in both quarters, presented a choice of difficulties. The South needed support. Could the North give it without exposing itself to ruin, since the enemy, by means of their ships, could suddenly unite their forces, and fall upon any point that they might consider weak? Such were the perplexities to which he was continually subjected, in having, with scanty means, to provide for the security of a vast extent of country, and with land forces merely, to contend with an amphibious enemy.

"Congress will better conceive in how delicate a situation we stand," writes he, "when I inform them, that the whole operating force present on this and the other side of the North River, amounts only to ten thousand four hundred rank and file, of which about two thousand eight hundred will have completed their term of service by the last of May; while the enemy's regular force at New York and its dependencies, must amount, upon a moderate calculation, to about eleven thousand rank and file. Our situation is more critical from the impossibility of concentrating our force, as well for the want of the means of taking the field, as on account of the early period of the season." *

* Letter to the President, April 2d.

Looking, however, as usual, to the good of the whole Union, he determined to leave something at hazard in the Middle States, where the country was internally so strong, and yield further succor to the Southern States, which had not equal military advantages. With the consent of Congress, therefore, he put the Maryland line under marching orders, together with the Delaware regiment, which acted with it, and the first regiment of artillery.

The Baron De Kalb, now at the head of the Maryland division, was instructed to conduct this detachment with all haste to the aid of General Lincoln. He might not arrive in time to prevent the fall of Charleston, but he might assist to arrest the progress of the enemy and save the Carolinas.

Washington had been put upon his guard of late against intrigues, forming by members of the old Conway cabal, who intended to take advantage of every military disaster to destroy confidence in him. His steady mind, however, was not to be shaken by suspicion. "Against intrigues of this kind incident to every man of a public station," said he, "his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event."

His feelings at the present juncture are admirably expressed in a letter to the Baron de Steuben. "The prospect, my dear Baron, is gloomy, and the storm threatens, but I hope we shall extricate ourselves, and bring every thing to a prosperous issue. I have been so inured to difficulties, in the course of this contest, that I have learned to look upon them with more tranquillity than formerly. Those which now present themselves, no doubt require vigorous exertions to overcome them, *and I am far from despairing of doing it.*" *

* Washington's Writings, vii. 10.

CHAPTER IV.

EVILS OF THE CONTINENTAL CURRENCY—MILITARY REFORMS PROPOSED BY WASHINGTON—CONGRESS JEALOUS OF MILITARY POWER—COMMITTEE OF THREE SENT TO CONFER WITH WASHINGTON—LOSSES BY DEPRECIATION OF THE CURRENCY TO BE MADE GOOD TO THE TROOPS—ARRIVAL OF LAFAYETTE—SCHEME FOR A COMBINED ATTACK UPON NEW YORK—ARNOLD HAS DEBTS AND DIFFICULTIES—HIS PROPOSALS TO THE FRENCH MINISTER—ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO THE ARMY—MUTINY OF THE CONNECTICUT TROOPS—WASHINGTON WRITES TO REED FOR AID FROM PENNSYLVANIA—GOOD EFFECTS OF HIS LETTER.

We have cited the depreciation of the currency as a main cause of the difficulties and distresses of the army. The troops were paid in paper money at its nominal value. A memorial of the officers of the Jersey line to the legislature of their State, represented the depreciation to be so great, that four months' pay of a private soldier would not procure for his family a single bushel of wheat; the pay of a colonel would not purchase oats for his horse, and a common laborer or express rider could earn four times the pay in paper of an American officer.

Congress, too, in its exigencies, being destitute of the power of levying taxes, which vested in the State governments, devolved upon those governments, in their separate capacities, the business of supporting the army. This produced a great inequality in the condition of the troops; according to the means and

the degree of liberality of their respective States. Some States furnished their troops amply, not only with clothing, but with many comforts and conveniencies; others were more contracted in their supplies; while others left their troops almost destitute. Some of the States, too, undertook to make good to their troops the loss in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency. As this was not general, it increased the inequality of condition. Those who fared worse than others were incensed, not only against their own State, but against the confederacy. They were disgusted with a service that made such injurious distinctions. Some of the officers resigned, finding it impossible, under actual circumstances, to maintain an appearance suitable to their rank. The men had not this resource. They murmured and showed a tendency to seditious combinations.

These, and other defects in the military system, were pressed by Washington upon the attention of Congress in a letter to the President: "It were devoutly to be wished," observed he, "that a plan could be devised by which every thing relating to the army could be conducted on a general principle, under the direction of Congress. This alone can give harmony and consistency to our military establishment, and I am persuaded it will be infinitely conducive to public economy." *

In consequence of this letter it was proposed in Congress to send a committee of three of its members to head-quarters to consult with the commander-in-chief, and, in conjunction with him, to effect such reforms and changes in the various departments of the army as might be deemed necessary. Warm debates ensued. It was objected that this would put too much

* Washington's Writings, Sparks, vol. vii. p. ii.

power into a few hands, and especially into those of the commander-in-chief; "*that his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army, joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations.*" *

The foregoing passage from a despatch of the French minister to his government, is strongly illustrative of the cautious jealousy still existing in Congress with regard to military power, even though wielded by Washington.

After a prolonged debate, a committee of three was chosen by ballot; it consisted of General Schuyler and Messrs. John Mathews, and Nathaniel Peabody. It was a great satisfaction to Washington to have his old friend and coadjutor, Schuyler, near him in this capacity, in which, he declared, no man could be more useful, "from his perfect knowledge of the resources of the country, the activity of his temper, his fruitfulness of expedients, and his sound military sense." †

The committee, on arriving at the camp, found the disastrous state of affairs had not been exaggerated. For five months the army had been unpaid. Every department was destitute of money or credit; there were rarely provisions for six days in advance; on some occasions the troops had been for several successive days without meat; there was no forage; the medical department had neither tea, chocolate, wine, nor spirituous liquors of any kind. "Yet the men," said Washington, "have borne their distress in general, with a firmness and patience never exceeded, and every commendation is due to the officers for encour-

* Washington's Writings, Sparks, vol. vii. p. 15.

† Washington to James Duane, Sparks, vii. 34.

aging them to it by exhortation and example. They have suffered equally with the men, and, their relative situations considered, rather more." Indeed, we have it from another authority, that many officers for some time lived on bread and cheese, rather than take any of the scanty allowance of meat from the men.*

To soothe the discontents of the army, and counteract the alarming effects of the depreciation of the currency, Congress now adopted the measure already observed by some of the States, and engaged to make good to the Continental and the independent troops the difference in the value of their pay caused by this depreciation; and that all moneys or other articles heretofore received by them, should be considered as advanced on account, and comprehended at their just value in the final settlement.

At this gloomy crisis came a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, dated April 27th, announcing his arrival at Boston. Washington's eyes, we are told, were suffused with tears as he read this most welcome epistle, and the warmth with which he replied to it, showed his affectionate regard for this young nobleman. "I received your letter," writes he, "with all the joy that the sincerest friendship could dictate, and with that impatience which an ardent desire to see you could not fail to inspire. * * * I most sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival in America, and shall embrace you with all the warmth of an affectionate friend when you come to head-quarters, where a bed is prepared for you."

He would immediately have sent a troop of horse to escort the marquis through the tory settlements between Morristown and the Hudson, had he known the route he intended to take; the

* Gen. William Laine to Joseph Reed. Reed's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 201.

latter, however, arrived safe at head-quarters on the 12th of May, where he was welcomed with acclamations, for he was popular with both officers and soldiers. Washington folded him in his arms in a truly paternal embrace, and they were soon closeted together to talk over the state of affairs, when Lafayette made known the result of his visit to France. His generous efforts at court had been crowned with success, and he brought the animating intelligence that a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, was to put to sea early in April, bringing a body of troops under the Count de Rochambeau, and might soon be expected on the coast to co-operate with the American forces; this, however, he was at liberty to make known only to Washington and Congress.

Remaining but a single day at head-quarters, he hastened on to the seat of government, where he met the reception which his generous enthusiasm in the cause of American Independence had so fully merited. Congress, in a resolution on the 16th of May, pronounced his return to America to resume his command a fresh proof of the disinterested zeal and persevering attachment which had secured him the public confidence and applause, and received with pleasure a "tender of the further services of so gallant and meritorious an officer."

Within three days after the departure of the marquis from Morristown, Washington, in a letter to him, gave his idea of the plan which it would be proper for the French fleet and army to pursue on their arrival upon the coast. The reduction of New York he considered the first enterprise to be attempted by the co-operating forces. The whole effective land force of the enemy he estimated at about eight thousand regulars and four thousand refugees, with some militia, on which no great dependence could

be placed. Their naval force consisted of one seventy-four gun ship, and three or four small frigates. In this situation of affairs the French fleet might enter the harbor and gain possession of it without difficulty, cut off its communications, and, with the co-operation of the American army, oblige the city to capitulate. He advised Lafayette, therefore, to write to the French commanders, urging them, on their arrival on the coast, to proceed with their land and naval forces, with all expedition, to Sandy Hook, and there await further advices; should they learn, however, that the expedition under Sir Henry Clinton had returned from the South to New York, they were to proceed to Rhode Island.

General Arnold was at this time in Philadelphia, and his connection with subsequent events requires a few words concerning his career, daily becoming more perplexed. He had again petitioned Congress on the subject of his accounts. The Board of Treasury had made a report far short of his wishes. He had appealed, and his appeal, together with all the documents connected with the case, was referred to a committee of three. The old doubts and difficulties continued: there was no prospect of a speedy settlement; he was in extremity. The French minister, M. de Luzerne, was at hand; a generous-spirited man, who had manifested admiration of his military character. To him Arnold now repaired in his exigency; made a passionate representation of the hardships of his case; the inveterate hostility he had experienced from Pennsylvania; the ingratitude of his country: the disorder brought into his private affairs by the war, and the necessity he should be driven to of abandoning his profession, unless he could borrow a sum equal to the amount of his debts. Such a loan, he intimated, it might be the interest of the King of

France to grant, thereby securing the attachment and gratitude of an American general of his rank and influence.

The French minister was too much of a diplomatist not to understand the bearing of the intimation, but he shrank from it, observing that the service required would degrade both parties. "When the envoy of a foreign power," said he, "gives, or if you will, lends money, it is ordinarily to corrupt those who receive it, and to make them the creatures of the sovereign whom he serves; or rather, he corrupts without persuading; he buys and does not secure. But the league entered into between the king and the United States, is the work of justice and of the wisest policy. It has for its basis a reciprocal interest and good will. In the mission with which I am charged, my true glory consists in fulfilling it without intrigue or cabal; without resorting to any secret practices, and by the force alone of the conditions of the alliance."

M. de Luzerne endeavored to soften this repulse and reproof, by complimenting Arnold on the splendor of his past career, and by alluding to the field of glory still before him; but the pressure of debts was not to be lightened by compliments, and Arnold retired from the interview, a mortified and desperate man.

He was in this mood when he heard of the expected arrival of aid from France, and the talk of an active campaign. It seemed as if his military ambition was once more aroused. To General Schuyler, who was about to visit the camp as one of the committee, he wrote on the 25th of May, expressing a determination to rejoin the army, although his wounds still made it painful to walk or ride, and intimated, that, in his present condition, the command at West Point would be best suited to him.

In reply, General Schuyler wrote from Morristown, June 2d, that he had put Arnold's letter into Washington's hands, and added: "He expressed a desire to do whatever was agreeable to you, dwelt on your abilities, your merits, your sufferings, and on the well-earned claims you have on your country, and intimated, that as soon as his arrangements for the campaign should take place, he would properly consider you."

In the mean time, the army with which Washington was to co-operate in the projected attack upon New York, was so reduced by the departure of troops whose term had expired, and the tardiness in furnishing recruits, that it did not amount quite to four thousand rank and file, fit for duty. Among these was a prevalent discontent. Their pay was five months in arrear; if now paid, it would be in Continental currency, without allowance for depreciation, consequently, almost worthless for present purposes.

A long interval of scarcity and several days of actual famine, brought matters to a crisis. On the 25th of May, in the dusk of the evening, two regiments of the Connecticut line assembled on their parade by beat of drum, and declared their intention to march home bag and baggage, "or, at best, to gain subsistence at the point of the bayonet." Colonel Meigs, while endeavoring to suppress the mutiny, was struck by one of the soldiers. Some officers of the Pennsylvania line came to his assistance, parading their regiments. Every argument and expostulation was used with the mutineers. They were reminded of their past good conduct, of the noble objects for which they were contending, and of the future indemnifications promised by Congress. Their answer was, that their sufferings were too great to be allayed by promises, in which they had little faith; they wanted present

relief, and some present substantial recompense for their services.

It was with difficulty they could be prevailed upon to return to their huts. Indeed, a few turned out a second time, with their packs, and were not to be pacified. These were arrested and confined.

This mutiny, Washington declared, had given him infinitely more concern than any thing that had ever happened, especially as he had no means of paying the troops excepting in Continental money, which, said he, "is evidently impracticable from the immense quantity it would require to pay them as much as would make up the depreciation." His uneasiness was increased by finding that printed handbills were secretly disseminated in his camp by the enemy, containing addresses to the soldiery, persuading them to desert.*

In this alarming state of destitution, Washington looked round anxiously for bread for his famishing troops. New York, Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were what he termed his "flour country." Virginia was sufficiently tasked to supply the South. New York, by legislative coercion, had already given all that she could spare from the subsistence of her inhabitants. Jersey was exhausted by the long residence of the army. Maryland had made great exertions, and might still do something more, and Delaware might contribute handsomely, in proportion to her extent: but Pennsylvania was now the chief dependence, for that State was represented to be full of flour. Washington's letter of the 16th of December, to President Reed, had obtained temporary relief from that quarter; he now wrote to him a

* Letter to the President of Cong., May 27. Sparks, vii. 54.

second time, and still more earnestly. "Every idea you can form of our distresses, will fall short of the reality. There is such a combination of circumstances to exhaust the patience of the soldiery, that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army, features of mutiny and sedition. All our departments, all our operations, are at a stand, and unless a system very different from that which has a long time prevailed, be immediately adopted throughout the States, our affairs must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of recovery."

Nothing discouraged Washington more than the lethargy that seemed to deaden the public mind. He speaks of it with a degree of despondency scarcely ever before exhibited. "I have almost ceased to hope. The country is in such a state of insensibility and indifference to its interests, that I dare not flatter myself with any change for the better." And again,—"The present juncture is so interesting, that if it does not produce correspondent exertions, it will be a proof that motives of honour, public good, and even self-preservation, have lost their influence on our minds. This is a decisive moment; one of the most, I will go further, and say, *the* most important America has seen. The court of France has made a glorious effort for our deliverance, and if we disappoint its intentions by our supineness, we must become contemptible in the eyes of all mankind, nor can we after that venture to confide that our allies will persist in an attempt to establish what, it will appear, we want inclination or ability to assist them in." With these and similar observations, he sought to rouse President Reed to extraordinary exertions. "This is a time," writes he, "to hazard and to take a tone of energy and decision. All parties but the disaffected will acquiesce in the necessity and give it their support." He urges Reed

to press upon the legislature of Pennsylvania the policy of investing its executive with plenipotentiary powers. "I should then," writes he, "expect every thing from your ability and zeal. This is no time for formality or ceremony. The crisis in every point of view is extraordinary, and extraordinary expedients are necessary. I am decided in this opinion."

His letter procured relief for the army from the legislature, and a resolve empowering the president and council, during its recess, to declare martial law, should circumstances render it expedient. "This," observes Reed, "gives us a power of doing what may be necessary without attending to the ordinary course of law, and we shall endeavor to exercise it with prudence and moderation." *

In like manner, Washington endeavored to rouse the dormant fire of Congress, and impart to it his own indomitable energy. "Certain I am," writes he to a member of that body, "unless Congress speak in a more decisive tone, unless they are vested with powers by the several States, competent to the purposes of war, or assume them as matters of right, and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they have hitherto done, that our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill-timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expenses and derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition of Congress; another neglects to do it; a third executes it by halves; and all differ, either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up-hill; and, while such a system as the present

* Sparks, Corr. of the Rev., vol. ii. p. 466.

one, or rather want of one, prevails, we shall ever be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage—I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. I see one army branching into thirteen, which, instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power of the United States, are considering themselves dependent on their respective States. In a word, I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consideration and respect which are due to them as the great representative body of America, and I am fearful of the consequences."

At this juncture came official intelligence from the South, to connect which with the general course of events, requires a brief notice of the operations of Sir Henry Clinton in that quarter.

* Letter to Joseph Jones. Sparks, vii. 67.

CHAPTER V.

SIEGE OF CHARLESTON CONTINUED—BRITISH SHIPS ENTER THE HARBOR—BRITISH TROOPS MARCH FROM SAVANNAH—TARLETON AND HIS DRAGOONS—HIS BRUSH WITH COLONEL WASHINGTON—CHARLESTON REINFORCED BY WOODFORD—TARLETON'S EXPLOITS AT MONK'S CORNER—AT LANEAU'S FERRY—SIR HENRY CLINTON REINFORCED—CHARLESTON CAPITULATES—AFFAIR OF TARLETON AND BUFORD ON THE WAXHAW—SIR HENRY CLINTON EMBARKS FOR NEW YORK.

In a preceding chapter we left the British fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot, preparing to force its way into the harbor of Charleston. Several days elapsed before the ships were able, by taking out their guns, provisions, and water, and availing themselves of wind and tide, to pass the bar. They did so on the 20th of March, with but slight opposition from several galleys. Commodore Whipple, then, seeing the vast superiority of their force, made a second retrograde move, stationing some of his ships in Cooper River, and sinking the rest at its mouth so as to prevent the enemy from running up that river, and cutting off communication with the country on the east: the crews and heavy cannon were landed to aid in the defence of the town.

The reinforcements expected from the North were not yet arrived; the militia of the State did not appear at Governor Rutledge's command, and other reliances were failing. "Many of

the North Carolina militia whose terms have expired leave us to-day," writes Lincoln to Washington, on the 20th of March. "They cannot be persuaded to remain longer, though the enemy are in our neighborhood." *

At this time the reinforcements which Sir Henry Clinton had ordered from Savannah were marching toward the Cambayee under Brigadier-general Patterson. On his flanks moved Major Ferguson with a corps of riflemen, and Major Cochrane with the infantry of the British legion; two brave and enterprising officers. It was a toilsome march, through swamps and difficult passes. Being arrived in the neighborhood of Port Royal, where Tarleton had succeeded, though indifferently, in remounting his dragoons, Patterson sent orders to that officer to join him. Tarleton hastened to obey the order. His arrival was timely. The Carolina militia having heard that all the British horses had perished at sea, made an attack on the front of General Patterson's force, supposing it to be without cavalry. To their surprise, Tarleton charged them with his dragoons, routed them, took several prisoners, and, what was more acceptable, a number of horses, some of the militia, he says, "being accoutred as cavaliers."

Tarleton had soon afterwards to encounter a worthy antagonist in Colonel William Washington, the same cavalry officer who had distinguished himself at Trenton, and was destined to distinguish himself still more in this Southern campaign. He is described as being six feet in height, broad, stout and corpulent. Bold in the field, careless in the camp; kind to his soldiers; harassing to his enemies; gay and good-humored; with an upright heart and a generous hand, a universal favorite. He

* Correspondence of the Rev., vol. ii. p. 419

was now at the head of a body of Continental cavalry, consisting of his own and Bland's light-horse, and Pulaski's hussars. A brush took place in the neighborhood of Rantoul's Bridge. Colonel Washington had the advantage, took several prisoners, and drove back the dragoons of the British legion, but durst not pursue them for want of infantry.*

On the 7th of April, Brigadier-general Woodford with seven hundred Virginia troops, after a forced march of five hundred miles in thirty days, crossed from the east side of Cooper River, by the only passage now open, and threw himself into Charleston. It was a timely reinforcement, and joyfully welcomed; for the garrison, when in greatest force, amounted to little more than two thousand regulars and one thousand North Carolina militia.

About the same time Admiral Arbuthnot, in the Roebuck, passed Sullivan's Island, with a fresh southerly breeze, at the head of a squadron of seven armed vessels and two transports. "It was a magnificent spectacle, satisfactory to the royalists," writes the admiral. The whigs regarded it with a rueful eye. Colonel Pinckney opened a heavy cannonade from the batteries of Fort Moultrie. The ships thundered in reply, and clouds of smoke were raised, under the cover of which they slipped by, with no greater loss than twenty-seven men killed and wounded. A store-ship which followed the squadron ran aground, was set on fire and abandoned, and subsequently blew up. The ships took a position near Fort Johnston, just without the range of the shot from the American batteries. After the passage of the ships, Colonel Pinckney and a part of the garrison withdrew from Fort Moultrie.

* Gordon, iii. p. 352—see also Tarleton, Hist. Campaign, p. 8.

The enemy had by this time completed his first parallel, and the town being almost entirely invested by sea and land, received a joint summons from the British general and admiral to surrender. "Sixty days have passed," writes Lincoln in reply, "since it has been known that your intentions against this town were hostile, in which, time has been afforded to abandon it, but duty and inclination point to the propriety of supporting it to the last extremity."

The British batteries were now opened. The siege was carried on deliberately by regular parallels, and on a scale of magnitude scarcely warranted by the moderate strength of the place. A great object with the besieged was to keep open the channel of communication with the country by the Cooper River, the last that remained by which they could receive reinforcements and supplies, or could retreat, if necessary. For this purpose, Governor Rutledge, leaving the town in the care of Lieutenant-governor Gadsden, and one half of the executive council, set off with the other half, and endeavored to rouse the militia between the Cooper and Santee Rivers. His success was extremely limited. Two militia posts were established by him; one between these rivers, the other at a ferry on the Santee; some regular troops, also, had been detached by Lincoln to throw up works about nine miles above the town, on the Wando, a branch of Cooper River, and at Lempriere's Point; and Brigadier-general Huger,* with a force of militia and Continental cavalry, including those of Colonel William Washington, was stationed at Monk's Corner, about thirty miles above Charleston, to guard the passes at the head waters of Cooper River.

* Pronounced Hugee—of French Huguenot descent.

Sir Henry Clinton, when proceeding with his second parallel, detached Lieutenant-colonel Webster with fourteen hundred men to break up these posts. The most distant one was that of Huger's cavalry at Monk's Corner. The surprisal of this was entrusted to Tarleton, who, with his dragoons, was in Webster's advanced guard. He was to be seconded by Major Patrick Ferguson with his riflemen.

Ferguson was a fit associate for Tarleton, in hardy, scrambling, partisan enterprise; equally intrepid and determined, but cooler and more open to impulses of humanity. He was the son of an eminent Scotch judge, had entered the army at an early age, and served in the German wars. The British extolled him as superior to the American Indians, in the use of the rifle, in short, as being the best marksman living. He had invented one which could be loaded at the breech and discharged seven times in a minute. It had been used with effect by his corps. Washington, according to British authority, had owed his life at the battle of Germantown, solely to Ferguson's ignorance of his person, having repeatedly been within reach of the colonel's unerring rifle.*

On the evening of the 13th of April, Tarleton moved with the van toward Monk's Corner. A night march had been judged the most advisable. It was made in profound silence and by unfrequented roads. In the course of the march, a negro was descried attempting to avoid notice. He was seized. A letter was found on him from an officer in Huger's camp, from which Tarleton learned something of its situation and the distribution of the troops. A few dollars gained the services of the negro as

* Annual Register, 1781, p. 52.

a guide. The surprisal of General Huger's camp was complete. Several officers and men who attempted to defend themselves, were killed or wounded. General Huger, Colonel Washington, with many others, officers and men, escaped in the darkness, to the neighboring swamps. One hundred officers, dragoons and hussars, were taken, with about four hundred horses and near fifty waggons, laden with arms, clothing and ammunition.

Biggins Bridge on Cooper River was likewise secured, and the way opened for Colonel Webster to advance nearly to the head of the passes, in such a manner as to shut up Charleston entirely.

In the course of the maraud which generally accompanies a surprisal of the kind, several dragoons of the British legion broke into a house in the neighborhood of Monk's Corner, and maltreated and attempted violence upon ladies residing there. The ladies escaped to Monk's Corner, where they were protected, and a carriage furnished to convey them to a place of safety. The dragoons were apprehended and brought to Monk's Corner, where by this time Colonel Webster had arrived. Major Ferguson, we are told, was for putting the dragoons to instant death, but Colonel Webster did not think his powers warranted such a measure. "They were sent to head-quarters," adds the historian, "and, I believe, afterwards tried and whipped." *

We gladly record one instance in which the atrocities which disgraced this invasion met with some degree of punishment; and we honor the rough soldier, Ferguson, for the fiat of "instant death," with which he would have requited the most infamous and dastardly outrage that brutalizes warfare.

* Stedman, ii. 183.

During the progress of the siege, General Lincoln held repeated councils of war, in which he manifested a disposition to evacuate the place. This measure was likewise urged by General Du Portail, who had penetrated, by secret ways, into the town. The inhabitants, however, in an agony of alarm, implored Lincoln not to abandon them to the mercies of an infuriated and licentious soldiery, and the general, easy and kind-hearted, yielded to their entreaties.

The American cavalry had gradually reassembled on the north of the Santee, under Colonel White of New Jersey, where they were joined by some militia infantry, and by Colonel William Washington, with such of his dragoons as had escaped at Monk's Corner. Cornwallis had committed the country between Cooper and Wando Rivers to Tarleton's charge, with orders to be continually on the move with the cavalry and infantry of the legion; to watch over the landing-places; obtain intelligence from the town, the Santee River and the back country, and to burn such stores as might fall into his hands, rather than risk their being retaken by the enemy.

Hearing of the fortuitous assemblage of American troops, Tarleton came suddenly upon them by surprise at Laneau's Ferry. It was one of his bloody exploits. Five officers and thirty-six men were killed and wounded, and seven officers and six dragoons taken, with horses, arms and equipments. Colonels White, Washington and Jamieson, with other officers and men, threw themselves in the river, and escaped by swimming; while some, who followed their example, perished.

The arrival of a reinforcement of three thousand men from New York enabled Sir Henry Clinton to throw a powerful detachment, under Lord Cornwallis, to the east of Cooper River, to

complete the investment of the town and cut off all retreat. Fort Moultrie surrendered. The batteries of the third parallel were opened upon the town. They were so near, that the Hessian yagers, or sharp-shooters, could pick off the garrison while at their guns or on the parapets. This fire was kept up for two days. The besiegers crossed the canal; pushed a double sap to the inside of the abatis, and prepared to make an assault by sea and land.

All hopes of successful defence were at an end. The works were in ruins; the guns almost all dismounted; the garrison exhausted with fatigue, the provisions nearly consumed. The inhabitants, dreading the horrors of an assault, joined in a petition to General Lincoln, and prevailed upon him to offer a surrender on terms which had already been offered and rejected. These terms were still granted, and the capitulation was signed on the 12th of May. The garrison were allowed some of the honors of war. They were to march out and deposit their arms, between the canal and the works, but the drums were not to beat a British march nor the colors to be uncased. The Continental troops and seamen were to be allowed their baggage, but were to remain prisoners of war. The officers of the army and navy were to retain their servants, swords and pistols, and their baggage unsearched; and were permitted to sell their horses; but not to remove them out of the town. The citizens and the militia were to be considered prisoners on parole; the latter to be permitted to return home, and both to be protected in person and property as long as they kept their parole. Among the prisoners, were the lieutenant-governor and five of the council.

The loss of the British in the siege was seventy-six killed and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded; that of the Ameri-

cans nearly the same. The prisoners taken by the enemy, exclusive of the sailors, amounted to five thousand six hundred and eighteen men; comprising every male adult in the city. The Continental troops did not exceed two thousand, five hundred of whom were in the hospital; the rest were citizens and militia.

Sir Henry Clinton considered the fall of Charleston decisive of the fate of South Carolina. To complete the subjugation of the country, he planned three expeditions into the interior. One, under Lieutenant-colonel Brown, was to move up the Savannah River to Augusta, on the borders of Georgia. Another, under Lieutenant-colonel Cruger, was to proceed up the southwest side of the Santee River to the district of Ninety-Six,* a fertile and salubrious region, between the Savannah and the Saluda rivers: while a third, under Cornwallis, was to cross the Santee, march up the northeast bank, and strike at a corps of troops under Colonel Buford, which were retreating to North Carolina with artillery and a number of waggons, laden with arms, ammunition and clothing.

Colonel Buford, in fact, had arrived too late for the relief of Charleston, and was now making a retrograde move; he had come on with three hundred and eighty troops of the Virginia line, and two field pieces, and had been joined by Colonel Washington with a few of his cavalry that had survived the surprisal by Tarleton. As Buford was moving with celerity, and had the advantage of distance, Cornwallis detached Tarleton in pursuit of him, with one hundred and seventy dragoons, a hundred mounted infantry, and a three-pounder. The bold partisan pushed forward with his usual ardor and rapidity. The weather

* So called in early times from being ninety-six miles from the principal town of the Cherokee nation.

was sultry, many of his horses gave out through fatigue and heat; he pressed others by the way, leaving behind such of his troops as could not keep pace with him. After a day and night of forced march, he arrived about dawn at Rugeley's Mills. Buford, he was told, was about twenty miles in advance of him, pressing on with all diligence to join another corps of Americans. Tarleton continued his march; the horses of the three-pounder were knocked up and unable to proceed; his wearied troops were continually dropping in the rear. Still he urged forward, anxious to overtake Buford before he could form a junction with the force he was seeking. To detain him he sent forward Captain Kinlock of his legion with a flag, and the following letter:

"Sir,—Resistance being vain, to prevent the effusion of blood, I make offers which can never be repeated. You are now almost encompassed by a corps of seven hundred light troops on horseback; half of that number are infantry with cannons. Earl Cornwallis is likewise within reach with nine British regiments. I warn you of the temerity of further inimical proceedings."

He concluded by offering the same conditions granted to the troops at Charleston; "if you are rash enough to reject them," added he, "the blood be upon your head."

Kinlock overtook Colonel Buford in full march on the banks of the Waxhaw, a stream on the border of North Carolina, and delivered the summons. The colonel read the letter without coming to a halt, detained the flag for some time in conversation, and then returned the following note:

"SIR,—I reject your proposals, and shall defend myself to the last extremity

"I have the honor, &c."

Tarleton, who had never ceased to press forward, came upon Buford's rear-guard about three o'clock in the afternoon, and captured a sergeant and four dragoons. Buford had not expected so prompt an appearance of the enemy. He hastily drew up his men in order of battle, in an open wood, on the right of the road. His artillery and waggons, which were in the advance escorted by part of his infantry, were ordered to continue on their march.

There appears to have been some confusion on the part of the Americans, and they had an impetuous foe to deal with. Before they were well prepared for action they were attacked in front and on both flanks by cavalry and mounted infantry. Tarleton, who advanced at the head of thirty chosen dragoons and some infantry, states that when within fifty paces of the Continental infantry, they presented, but he heard their officers command them to retain their fire until the British cavalry were nearer. It was not until the latter were within ten yards that there was a partial discharge of musketry. Several of the dragoons suffered by this fire. Tarleton himself was unhorsed, but his troopers rode on. The American battalion was broken; most of the men threw down their arms and begged for quarter, but were cut down without mercy. One hundred and thirteen were slain on the spot, and one hundred and fifty so mangled and maimed that they could not be removed. Colonel Buford and a few of the cavalry escaped, as did about a hundred of the infantry, who were with the baggage in the advance. Fifty prisoners were all

that were in a condition to be carried off by Tarleton as trophies of this butchery.

The whole British loss was two officers and three privates killed, and one officer and fourteen privates wounded. What, then, could excuse this horrible carnage of an almost prostrate enemy? We give Tarleton's own excuse for it. It commenced, he says, at the time he was dismounted, and before he could mount another horse; and his cavalry were exasperated by a report that he was slain. Cornwallis apparently accepted this excuse, for he approved of his conduct in the expedition, and recommended him as worthy of some distinguished mark of royal favor. The world at large, however, have not been so easily satisfied, and the massacre at the Waxhaw has remained a sanguinary stain on the reputation of that impetuous soldier.

The two other detachments which had been sent out by Clinton, met with nothing but submission. The people in general, considering resistance hopeless, accepted the proffered protection, and conformed to its humiliating terms. One class of the population in this colony seems to have regarded the invaders as deliverers. "All the negroes," writes Tarleton, "men, women and children, upon the appearance of any detachment of king's troops, thought themselves absolved from all respect to their American masters, and entirely released from servitude. They quitted the plantations and followed the army." *

Sir Henry now persuaded himself that South Carolina was subdued, and proceeded to station garrisons in various parts, to maintain it in subjection. In the fulness of his confidence, he issued a proclamation on the 3d of June, discharging all the mili-

* Tarleton's Hist. of Campaign, p. 89.

tary prisoners from their paroles after the 20th of the month, excepting those captured in Fort Moultrie and Charleston. All thus released from their parole were reinstated in the rights and duties of British subjects; but, at the same time, they were bound to take an active part in support of the government hitherto opposed by them. Thus the protection afforded them while prisoners was annulled by an arbitrary fiat—neutrality was at an end. All were to be ready to take up arms at a moment's notice. Those who had families were to form a militia for home defence. Those who had none, were to serve with the royal forces. All who should neglect to return to their allegiance, or should refuse to take up arms against the independence of their country, were to be considered as rebels and treated accordingly.

Having struck a blow, which, as he conceived, was to ensure the subjugation of the South, Sir Henry embarked for New York on the 5th of June, with a part of his forces, leaving the residue under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who was to carry the war into North Carolina, and thence into Virginia.

CHAPTER VI.

KNYPHAUSEN MARAUDS THE JERSEYS—SACKING OF CONNECTICUT FARMS—MURDER OF MRS. CALDWELL—ARRIVAL AND MOVEMENTS OF SIR HENRY CLINTON—SPRINGFIELD BURNT—THE JERSEYS EVACUATED.

A HANDBILL published by the British authorities in New York, reached Washington's camp on the 1st of June, and made known the surrender of Charleston. A person from Amboy reported, moreover, that on the 30th of May he had seen one hundred sail of vessels enter Sandy Hook. These might bring Sir Henry Clinton with the whole or part of his force. In that case, flushed with his recent success, he might proceed immediately up the Hudson, and make an attempt upon West Point, in the present distressed condition of the garrison. So thinking, Washington wrote to General Howe, who commanded that important post, to put him on his guard, and took measures to have him furnished with supplies.

The report concerning the fleet proved to be erroneous, but on the 6th of June came a new alarm. The enemy, it was said, were actually landing in force at Elizabethtown Point, to carry fire and sword into the Jerseys!

It was even so. Knyphausen, through spies and emissaries, had received exaggerated accounts of the recent outbreak in

Washington's camp, and of the general discontent among the people of New Jersey; and was persuaded that a sudden show of military protection, following up the news of the capture of Charleston, would produce a general desertion among Washington's troops, and rally back the inhabitants of the Jerseys to their allegiance to the crown.

In this belief he projected a descent into the Jerseys with about five thousand men, and some light artillery, who were to cross in divisions in the night of the 5th of June from Staten Island to Elizabethtown Point.

The first division, led by Brigadier-general Sterling, actually landed before dawn of the 6th, and advanced as silently as possible. The heavy and measured tramp of the troops, however, caught the ear of an American sentinel stationed at a fork where the roads from the old and new point joined. He challenged the dimly descried mass as it approached, and receiving no answer, fired into it. That shot wounded General Sterling in the thigh, and ultimately proved mortal. The wounded general was carried back, and Knyphausen took his place.

This delayed the march until sunrise, and gave time for the troops of the Jersey line, under Colonel Elias Dayton, stationed in Elizabethtown, to assemble. They were too weak in numbers, however, to withstand the enemy, but retreated in good order, skirmishing occasionally. The invading force passed through the village; in the advance, a squadron of dragoons of Simcoe's regiment of Queen's Rangers, with drawn swords and glittering helmets; followed by British and Hessian infantry.*

Signal guns and signal fires were rousing the country. The

* Passages in the Hist. of Elizabethtown, Capt. W. C. De Hart.

militia and yeomanry armed themselves with such weapons as were at hand, and hastened to their alarm posts. The enemy took the old road, by what was called Galloping Hill, toward the village of Connecticut Farms; fired upon from behind walls and thickets by the hasty levies of the country.

At Connecticut Farms, the retreating troops under Dayton fell in with the Jersey brigade, under General Maxwell, and a few militia joining them, the Americans were enabled to make some stand, and even to hold the enemy in check. The latter, however, brought up several field pieces, and being reinforced by a second division which had crossed from Staten Island some time after the first, compelled the Americans again to retreat. Some of the enemy, exasperated at the unexpected opposition they had met with throughout their march, and pretending that the inhabitants of this village had fired upon them from their windows, began to pillage and set fire to the houses. It so happened that to this village the Reverend James Caldwell, "the rousing gospel preacher," had removed his family as to a place of safety, after his church at Elizabethtown had been burnt down by the British in January. On the present occasion he had retreated with the regiment to which he was chaplain. His wife, however, remained at the parsonage with her two youngest children, confiding in the protection of Providence, and the humanity of the enemy.

When the sacking of the village took place, she retired with her children into a back room of the house. Her infant of eight months was in the arms of an attendant; she herself was seated on the side of a bed holding a child of three years by the hand, and was engaged in prayer. All was terror and confusion in the village; when suddenly a musket was discharged in at the window.

Two balls struck her in the breast, and she fell dead on the floor. The parsonage and church were set on fire, and it was with difficulty her body was rescued from the flames.

In the mean time Knyphausen was pressing on with his main force towards Morristown. The booming of alarm guns had roused the country; every valley was pouring out its yeomanry. Two thousand were said to be already in arms below the mountains.

Within half a mile of Springfield Knyphausen halted to reconnoitre. That village, through which passes the road to Springfield, had been made the American rallying-point. It stands at the foot of what are called the Short Hills, on the west side of Rahway River, which runs in front of it. On the bank of the river, General Maxwell's Jersey brigade and the militia of the neighborhood were drawn up to dispute the passage; and on the Short Hills in the rear was Washington with the main body of his forces, not mutinous and in confusion, but all in good order, strongly posted, and ready for action.

Washington had arrived and taken his position that afternoon, prepared to withstand an encounter though not to seek one. All night his camp fires lighted up the Short Hills, and he remained on the alert expecting to be assailed in the morning; but in the morning no enemy was to be seen.

Knyphausen had experienced enough to convince him that he had been completely misinformed as to the disposition of the Jersey people and of the army. Disappointed as to the main objects of his enterprise, he had retreated under cover of the night, to the place of his debarkation, intending to recross to Staten Island immediately.

In the camp at the Short Hills was the Reverend James Cald-

well, whose home had been laid desolate. He was still ignorant of the event, but had passed a night of great anxiety, and, procuring the protection of a flag, hastened back in the morning to Connecticut Farms. He found the village in ashes, and his wife a mangled corpse!

In the course of the day Washington received a letter from Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who was reconnoitring in the neighborhood of Elizabethtown Point. "I have seen the enemy," writes he. "Those in view I calculate at about three thousand. There may be, and probably are, enough others out of sight. They have sent all their horses to the other side except about fifty or sixty. Their baggage has also been sent across, and their wounded. It is not ascertained that any of their infantry have passed on the other side. * * * The present movement may be calculated to draw us down and betray us into an action. They may have desisted from their intention of passing till night, for fear of our falling upon their rear."

As Washington was ignorant of the misinformation which had beguiled Knyphausen into this enterprise, the movements of that general, his sudden advance, and as sudden retreat, were equally inexplicable. At one time, he supposed his inroad to be a mere foraging incursion; then, as Hamilton had suggested, a device to draw him down from his stronghold into the plain, where the superiority of the British force would give them the advantage.

Knyphausen, in fact, had been impeded in crossing his troops to Staten Island, by the low tide and deep muddy shore, which rendered it difficult to embark the cavalry; and by a destructive fire kept up by militia posted along the river banks, and the adjacent woods. In the mean while he had time to reflect on the

ridicule that would await him in New York, should his expedition prove fruitless, and end in what might appear a precipitate flight. This produced indecision of mind, and induced him to recall the troops which had already crossed, and which were necessary, he said, to protect his rear.

For several days he lingered with his troops at Elizabethtown and the Point beyond; obliging Washington to exercise unremitting vigilance for the safety of the Jerseys and of the Hudson. It was a great satisfaction to the latter to be joined by Major Henry Lee, who with his troop of horse had hastened on from the vicinity of Philadelphia, where he had recently been stationed.

In the mean time, the tragical fate of Mrs. Caldwell produced almost as much excitement throughout the country as that which had been caused in a preceding year, by the massacre of Miss McCrea. She was connected with some of the first people of New Jersey; was winning in person and character, and universally beloved. Knyphausen was vehemently assailed in the American papers, as if responsible for this atrocious act. The enemy, however, attributed her death to a random shot, discharged in a time of confusion, or to the vengeance of a menial who had a deadly pique against her husband; but the popular voice persisted in execrating it as the wilful and wanton act of a British soldier.

On the 17th of June the fleet from the South actually arrived in the bay of New York, and Sir Henry Clinton landed his troops on Staten Island, but almost immediately re-embarked them; as if meditating an expedition up the river.

Fearing for the safety of West Point, Washington set off on the 21st June, with the main body of his troops, towards Pomp-

ton; while General Greene, with Maxwell and Stark's brigades, Lee's dragoons and the militia of the neighborhood, remained encamped on the Short Hills, to cover the country and protect the stores at Morristown.

Washington's movements were slow and wary, unwilling to be far from Greene until better informed of the designs of the enemy. At Rockaway Bridge, about eleven miles beyond Morristown, he received word on the 23d, that the enemy were advancing from Elizabethtown against Springfield. Supposing the military depot at Morristown to be their ultimate object, he detached a brigade to the assistance of Greene, and fell back five or six miles, so as to be in supporting distance of him.

The re-embarkation of the troops at Staten Island had, in fact, been a stratagem of Sir Henry Clinton to divert the attention of Washington, and enable Knyphausen to carry out the enterprise which had hitherto hung fire. No sooner did the latter ascertain that the American commander-in-chief had moved off with his main force towards the Highlands, than he sallied from Elizabethtown five thousand strong, with a large body of cavalry, and fifteen or twenty pieces of artillery; hoping not merely to destroy the public stores at Morristown, but to get possession of those difficult hills and defiles, among which Washington's army had been so securely posted, and which constituted the strength of that part of the country.

It was early on the morning of the 23d that Knyphausen pushed forward toward Springfield. Beside the main road which passes directly through the village toward Morristown, there is another, north of it, called the Vauxhall road, crossing several small streams, the confluence of which forms the Rahway. These two roads unite beyond the village in the principal pass of the

Short Hills. The enemy's troops advanced rapidly in two compact columns, the right one by the Vauxhall road, the other, by the main or direct road. General Greene was stationed among the Short Hills, about a mile above the town. His troops were distributed at various posts, for there were many passes to guard.

At five o'clock in the morning, signal-guns gave notice of the approach of the enemy. The drums beat to arms throughout the camp. The troops were hastily called in from their posts among the mountain passes, and preparations were made to defend the village.

Major Lee, with his dragoons and a picket-guard, was posted on the Vauxhall road, to check the right column of the enemy in its advance. Colonel Dayton, with his regiment of New Jersey militia, was to check the left column on the main road. Colonel Angel of Rhode Island, with about two hundred picked men, and a piece of artillery, was to defend a bridge over the Rahway, a little west of the town. Colonel Shreve, stationed with his regiment at a second bridge over a branch of the Rahway east of the town, was to cover, if necessary, the retreat of Colonel Angel. Those parts of Maxwell and Stark's brigades which were not thus detached, were drawn up on high grounds in the rear of the town, having the militia on their flanks.

There was some sharp fighting at a bridge on the Vauxhall road, where Major Lee with his dragoons and picket-guard held the right column at bay; a part of the column, however, forded the stream above the bridge, gained a commanding position, and obliged Lee to retire.

The left column met with similar opposition from Dayton and his Jersey regiment. None showed more ardor in the fight than

Caldwell the chaplain. The image of his murdered wife was before his eyes. Finding the men in want of wadding, he galloped to the Presbyterian church and brought thence a quantity of Watts's psalm and hymn books, which he distributed for the purpose among the soldiers. "Now," cried he, "put Watts into them, boys!"

The severest fighting of the day was at the bridge over the Rahway. For upwards of half an hour Colonel Angel defended it with his handful of men against a vastly superior force. One fourth of his men were either killed or disabled: the loss of the enemy was still more severe. Angel was at length compelled to retire. He did so in good order, carrying off his wounded, and making his way through the village to the bridge beyond it. Here his retreat was bravely covered by Colonel Shreve, but he too was obliged to give way before the overwhelming force of the enemy, and join the brigades of Maxwell and Stark upon the hill.

General Greene, finding his front too much extended for his small force, and that he was in danger of being outflanked on the left by the column pressing forward on the Vauxhall road, took post with his main body on the first range of hills, where the roads were brought near to a point, and passed between him and the height occupied by Stark and Maxwell. He then threw out a detachment which checked the further advance of the right column of the enemy along the Vauxhall road, and secured that pass through the Short Hills. Feeling himself now strongly posted, he awaited with confidence the expected attempt of the enemy to gain the height. No such attempt was made. The resistance already experienced, especially at the bridge, and the sight of militia gathering from various points, dampened the

ardor of the hostile commander. He saw that, should he persist in pushing for Morristown, he would have to fight his way through a country abounding with difficult passes, every one of which would be obstinately disputed; and that the enterprise, even if successful, might cost too much, beside taking him too far from New York, at a time when a French armament might be expected.

Before the brigade detached by Washington arrived at the scene of action, therefore, the enemy had retreated. Previous to their retreat they wreaked upon Springfield the same vengeance they had inflicted on Connecticut Farms. The whole village, excepting four houses, was reduced to ashes. Their second retreat was equally ignoble with their first. They were pursued and harassed the whole way to Elizabethtown by light scouting parties and by the militia and yeomanry of the country, exasperated by the sight of the burning village. Lee, too, came upon their rear-guard with his dragoons; captured a quantity of stores abandoned by them in the hurry of retreat, and made prisoners of several refugees.

It was sunset when the enemy reached Elizabethtown. During the night they passed over to Staten Island by their bridge of boats. By six o'clock in the morning all had crossed, and the bridge had been removed—and the State of New Jersey, so long harassed by the campaignings of either army, was finally evacuated by the enemy. It had proved a school of war to the American troops. The incessant marchings and counter-marchings; the rude encampments; the exposures to all kinds of hardship and privation; the alarms; the stratagems; the rough encounters and adventurous enterprises of which this had been the theatre for the last three or four years, had rendered the patriot

soldier hardy, adroit, and long-suffering; had accustomed him to danger, inured him to discipline, and brought him nearly on a level with the European mercenary in the habitudes and usages of arms, while he had the superior incitements of home, country, and independence. The ravaging incursions of the enemy had exasperated the most peace-loving parts of the country; made soldiers of the husbandmen, acquainted them with their own powers, and taught them that the foe was vulnerable. The recent ineffectual attempts of a veteran general to penetrate the fastnesses of Morristown, though at the head of a veteran force, "which would once have been deemed capable of sweeping the whole continent before it," was a lasting theme of triumph to the inhabitants; and it is still the honest boast among the people of Morris County, that "the enemy never were able to get a footing among our hills." At the same time the conflagration of villages, by which they sought to cover or revenge their repeated failures, and their precipitate retreat, harassed and insulted by half-disciplined militia, and a crude, rustic levy, formed an ignominious close to the British campaigns in the Jerseys.

CHAPTER VII.

WASHINGTON APPLIES TO THE STATE LEGISLATURES FOR AID—SUBSCRIPTIONS OF THE LADIES OF PHILADELPHIA—GATES APPOINTED TO COMMAND THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT—FRENCH FLEET ARRIVES AT NEWPORT—PREPARATION FOR A COMBINED MOVEMENT AGAINST NEW YORK—ARNOLD OBTAINS COMMAND AT WEST POINT—GREENE RESIGNS THE OFFICE OF QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

Apprehensive that the next move of the enemy would be up the Hudson, Washington resumed his measures for the security of West Point; moving towards the Highlands in the latter part of June. Circumstances soon convinced him that the enemy had no present intention of attacking that fortress, but merely menaced him at various points, to retard his operations, and oblige him to call out the militia; thereby interrupting agriculture, distressing the country, and rendering his cause unpopular. Having, therefore, caused the military stores in the Jerseys to be removed to more remote and secure places, he countermanded by letter the militia, which were marching to camp from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

He now exerted himself to the utmost to procure from the different State Legislatures, their quotas and supplies for the regular army. "The sparing system," said he, "has been tried until it has brought us to a crisis little less than desperate." This was the time, by one great exertion, to put an end to the

war. The basis of every thing was the completion of the Continental battalions to their full establishment; otherwise, nothing decisive could be attempted, and this campaign, like all the former, must be chiefly defensive. He warned against those "indolent and narrow politicians, who, except at the moment of some signal misfortune, are continually crying, *all is well*, and who, to save a little present expense, and avoid some temporary inconvenience, with no ill designs in the main, would protract the war, and risk the perdition of our liberties." *

The desired relief, however, had to be effected through the ramifications of General and State governments, and their committees. The operations were tardy and unproductive. Liberal contributions were made by individuals, a bank was established by the inhabitants of Philadelphia to facilitate the supplies of the army, and an association of ladies of that city raised by subscription between seven and eight thousand dollars, which were put at the disposition of Washington, to be laid out in such a manner as he might think "most honorable and gratifying to the brave old soldiers who had borne so great a share of the burden of the war."

The capture of General Lincoln at Charleston had left the Southern department without a commander-in-chief. As there were likely to be important military operations in that quarter, Washington had intended to recommend General Greene for the appointment. He was an officer on whose abilities, discretion, and disinterested patriotism he had the fullest reliance, and whom he had always found thoroughly disposed to act in unison with him in his general plan of carrying on the war. Congress,

* Letter to Gov. Trumbull. Sparks, vii. 93.

however, with unbecoming precipitancy, gave that important command to General Gates (June 13th), without waiting to consult Washington's views or wishes.

Gates, at the time, was on his estate in Virginia, and accepted the appointment with avidity, anticipating new triumphs. His old associate, General Lee, gave him an ominous caution at parting. "Beware that your Northern laurels do not change to Southern willows!"

On the 10th of July a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, arrived at Newport, in Rhode Island. It was composed of seven ships of the line, two frigates and two bombs, and convoyed transports on board of which were upwards of five thousand troops. This was the first division of the forces promised by France, of which Lafayette had spoken. The second division had been detained at Brest for want of transports, but might soon be expected.

The Count de Rochambeau, Lieutenant-general of the royal armies, was commander-in-chief of this auxiliary force. He was a veteran, fifty-five years of age, who had early distinguished himself, when colonel of the regiment of Auvergne, and had gained laurels in various battles, especially that of Kloster camp, of which he decided the success. Since then, he had risen from one post of honor to another, until intrusted with his present important command.*

Another officer of rank and distinction in this force, was Major-general the Marquis de Chastellux, a friend and relative of Lafayette, but much his senior, being now forty-six years of age.

* Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, was born at Vendome, in France, 1725.

He was not only a soldier, but a man of letters, and one familiar with courts as well as camps.

Count Rochambeau's first despatch to Vergennes, the French minister of State (July 16th), gave a discouraging picture of affairs. "Upon my arrival here," writes he, "the country was in consternation, the paper money had fallen to sixty for one, and even the government takes it up at forty for one. Washington had for a long time only three thousand men under his command. The arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette, and the announcement of succors from France, afforded some encouragement; but the tories, who are very numerous, gave out that it was only a temporary assistance, like that of Count d'Estaing. In describing to you our reception at this place, we shall show you the feeling of all the inhabitants of the continent. This town is of considerable size, and contains, like the rest, both whigs and tories. I landed with my staff, without troops; nobody appeared in the streets; those at the windows looked sad and depressed. I spoke to the principal persons of the place, and told them, as I wrote to General Washington, that this was merely the advanced guard of a greater force, and that the king was determined to support them with his whole power. In twenty-four hours their spirits rose, and last night all the streets, houses, and steeples were illuminated, in the midst of fireworks, and the greatest rejoicings. I am now here with a single company of grenadiers, until wood and straw shall have been collected; my camp is marked out, and I hope to have the troops landed to-morrow."

Still, however, there appears to have been a lingering feeling of disappointment in the public bosom. "The whigs are pleased," writes de Rochambeau, "but they say that the king

ought to have sent twenty thousand men, and twenty ships, to drive the enemy from New York; that the country was infallibly ruined; that it is impossible to find a recruit to send to General Washington's army, without giving him one hundred hard dollars to engage for six months' service, and they beseech his majesty to assist them with all his strength. The war will be an expensive one; we pay even for our quarters, and for the land covered with the camp." *

The troops were landed to the east of the town; their encampment was on a fine situation, and extended nearly across the island. Much was said of their gallant and martial appearance. There was the noted regiment of Auvergne, in command of which the Count de Rochambeau had first gained his laurels, but which was now commanded by his son the viscount, thirty years of age. A legion of six hundred men also was especially admired; it was commanded by the Duke de Lauzun (Lauzun-Biron), who had gained reputation in the preceding year by the capture of Senegal. A feeling of adventure and romance, associated with the American struggle, had caused many of the young nobility to seek this new field of achievement, who, to use de Rochambeau's words, "brought out with them the heroic and chivalrous courage of the ancient French nobility." To their credit be it spoken also, they brought with them the ancient French politeness, for it was remarkable how soon they accommodated themselves to circumstances, made light of all the privations and inconveniences of a new country, and conformed to the familiar simplicity of republican manners. General Heath, who, by Washington's orders, was there to offer his services, was,

* Sparks. Writings of Washington, vii. 504.

by his own account, "charmed with the officers," who, on their part, he said, expressed the highest satisfaction with the treatment they received.

The instructions of the French ministry to the Count de Rochambeau placed him entirely under the command of General Washington. The French troops were to be considered as auxiliaries, and as such were to take the left of the American troops, and, in all cases of ceremony, to yield them the preference. This considerate arrangement had been adopted at the suggestion of the Marquis de Lafayette, and was intended to prevent the recurrence of those questions of rank and etiquette which had heretofore disturbed the combined service.

Washington, in general orders, congratulated the army on the arrival of this timely and generous succor, which he hailed as a new tie between France and America; anticipating that the only contention between the two armies would be to excel each other in good offices, and in the display of every military virtue. The American cockade had hitherto been black, that of the French was white; he recommended to his officers a cockade of black and white intermingled in compliment to their allies, and as a symbol of friendship and union.

His joy at this important reinforcement was dashed by the mortifying reflection, that he was still unprovided with the troops and military means requisite for the combined operations meditated. Still he took upon himself the responsibility of immediate action, and forthwith despatched Lafayette to have an interview with the French commanders, explain the circumstances of the case, and concert plans for the proposed attack upon New York.

"Pressed on all sides by a choice of difficulties," writes he to

the President, "I have adopted that line of conduct which suited the dignity and faith of Congress, the reputation of these States, and the honor of our arms. Neither the season nor a regard to decency would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the States to fulfil either their engagements, preserve their credit and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. * * * * * * I shall proceed on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honor, and not suffer us to fail for want of means, which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the States, confirms the opinion I have entertained of the sufficient resources of the country. As to the disposition of the people to submit to any arrangements for bringing them forth, I see no reasonable grounds to doubt. If we fail for want of proper exertions, in any of the governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, to my country, and to the world."

The arrival, however, of the British Admiral Graves, at New York, on the 13th of July, with six ships-of-the-line, gave the enemy such a superiority of naval force, that the design on New York was postponed until the second French division should make its appearance, or a squadron under the Count de Guichen, which was expected from the West Indies.

In the mean time, Sir Henry Clinton, who had information of all the plans and movements of the allies, determined to forestall the meditated attack upon New York, by beating up the French quarters on Rhode Island. This he was to do in person at the head of six thousand men, aided by Admiral Arbuthnot with his fleet. Sir Henry accordingly proceeded with his troops to Throg's Neck on the Sound; there to embark on board of

transports which Arbuthnot was to provide. No sooner did Washington learn that so large a force had left New York, than he crossed the Hudson to Peekskill, and prepared to move towards King's Bridge, with the main body of his troops, which had recently been reinforced. His intention was, either to oblige Sir Henry to abandon his project against Rhode Island, or to strike a blow at New York during his absence. As Washington was on horseback, observing the crossing of the last division of his troops, General Arnold approached, having just arrived in the camp. Arnold had been manœuvring of late to get the command of West Point, and, among other means, had induced Mr. Robert R. Livingston, then a New York member of Congress, to suggest it in a letter to Washington as a measure of great expediency. Arnold now accosted the latter to know whether any place had been assigned to him. He was told, that he was to command the left wing, and Washington added, that they would have further conversation on the subject when he returned to head-quarters. The silence and evident chagrin with which the reply was received surprised Washington, and he was still more surprised when he subsequently learned that Arnold was more desirous of a garrison post than of a command in the field, although a post of honor had been assigned him, and active service was anticipated. Arnold's excuse was that his wounded leg still unfitted him for action either on foot or horseback; but that at West Point he might render himself useful.

The expedition of Sir Henry was delayed by the tardy arrival of transports. In the mean time he heard of the sudden move of Washington, and learned, moreover, that the position of the French at Newport had been strengthened by the militia from the neighboring country. These tidings disconcerted his

plans. He left Admiral Arbuthnot to proceed with his squadron to Newport, blockade the French fleet, and endeavor to intercept the second division, supposed to be on its way, while he with his troops hastened back to New York.

In consequence of their return Washington again withdrew his forces to the west side of the Hudson; first establishing a post and throwing up small works at Dobbs Ferry, about ten miles above King's Bridge, to secure a communication across the river for the transportation of troops and ordnance, should the design upon New York be prosecuted.

Arnold now received the important command which he had so earnestly coveted. It included the fortress at West Point and the posts from Fishkill to King's Ferry, together with the corps of infantry and cavalry advanced towards the enemy's line on the east side of the river. He was ordered to have the works at the Point completed as expeditiously as possible, and to keep all his posts on their guard against surprise; there being constant apprehensions that the enemy might make a sudden effort to gain possession of the river.

Having made these arrangements, Washington recrossed to the west side of the Hudson, and took post at Orangetown or Tappan, on the borders of the Jerseys, and opposite to Dobbs Ferry, to be at hand for any attempt upon New York.

The execution of this cherished design, however, was again postponed by intelligence that the second division of the French reinforcements was blockaded in the harbor of Brest by the British: Washington still had hopes that it might be carried into effect by the aid of the squadron of the Count de Guichen from the West Indies; or of a fleet from Cadiz.

At this critical juncture, an embarrassing derangement took

place in the quartermaster-general's department, of which General Greene was the head. The reorganization of this department had long been in agitation. A system had been digested by Washington, Schuyler and Greene, adapted, as they thought, to the actual situation of the country. Greene had offered, should it be adopted, to continue in the discharge of the duties of the department, without any extra emolument other than would cover the expenses of his family. Congress devised a different scheme. He considered it incapable of execution, and likely to be attended with calamitous and disgraceful results; he therefore tendered his resignation. Washington endeavored to prevent its being accepted. "Unless effectual measures are taken," said he, "to induce General Greene and the other principal officers of that department to continue their services, there must of necessity be a total stagnation of military business. We not only must cease from the preparations for the campaign, but in all probability, shall be obliged to disperse, if not disband the army, for want of susbistence."

The tone and manner, however, assumed by General Greene in offering his resignation, and the time chosen, when the campaign was opened, the enemy in the field, and the French commanders waiting for co-operation, were deeply offensive to Congress. His resignation was promptly accepted: there was a talk even of suspending him from his command in the line.

Washington interposed his sagacious and considerate counsels to allay this irritation, and prevent the infliction of such an indignity upon an officer, for whom he entertained the highest esteem and friendship. "A procedure of this kind, without a proper trial," said he, "must touch the feelings of every officer. It will show in a conspicuous point of view the uncertain tenure

by which they hold their commissions. In a word, it will exhibit such a specimen of power, that I question much if there is an officer in the whole line that will hold a commission beyond the end of the campaign, if he does till then. Such an act in the most despotic government would be attended at least with loud complaints."

The counsels of Washington prevailed; the indignity was not inflicted, and Congress was saved from the error, if not disgrace, of discarding from her service one of the ablest and most meritorious of her generals.

Colonel Pickering was appointed to succeed Greene as quartermaster-general, but the latter continued for some time, at the request of Washington, to aid in conducting the business of the department. Colonel Pickering acquitted himself in his new office with zeal, talents and integrity, but there were radical defects in the system which defied all ability and exertion.

The commissariat was equally in a state of derangement. "At this very juncture," writes Washington (Aug. 20th), "I am reduced to the painful alternative, either of dismissing a part of the militia now assembling, or of letting them come forward to starve; which it will be extremely difficult for the troops already in the field to avoid. * * * * Every day's experience proves more and more that the present mode of supplies is the most uncertain, expensive and injurious, that could be devised. It is impossible for us to form any calculations of what we are to expect, and consequently, to concert any plans for future execution. No adequate provision of forage having been made, we are now obliged to subsist the horses of the army by force, which, among other evils, often gives rise to civil disputes, and prosecutions, as vexatious as they are burdensome to the public. "In

his emergencies he was forced to empty the magazines at West Point; yet these afforded but temporary relief; scarcity continued to prevail to a distressing degree, and on the 6th of September, he complains that the army has for two or three days been entirely destitute of meat. "Such injury to the discipline of the army," adds he, "and such distress to the inhabitants, result from these frequent events, that my feelings are hurt beyond description at the cries of the one and at seeing the other."

The anxiety of Washington at this moment of embarrassment was heightened by the receipt of disastrous intelligence from the South; the purport of which we shall succinctly relate in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

NORTH CAROLINA—DIFFICULTIES OF ITS INVASION—CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY—SUMTER, HIS CHARACTER AND STORY—ROCKY MOUNT—HANGING ROCK—SLOW ADVANCE OF DE KALB—GATES TAKES COMMAND—DESOLATE MARCH—BATTLE OF CAMDEN—FLIGHT OF GATES—SUMTER SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT THE WAXHAWS—WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF MILITIA—HIS LETTER TO GATES.

Lord Cornwallis, when left in military command at the South by Sir Henry Clinton, was charged, it will be recollected, with the invasion of North Carolina. It was an enterprise in which much difficulty was to be apprehended, both from the character of the people and the country. The original settlers were from various parts, most of them men who had experienced political or religious oppression, and had brought with them a quick sensibility to wrong, a stern appreciation of their rights, and an indomitable spirit of freedom and independence. In the heart of the State was a hardy Presbyterian stock, the Scotch Irish, as they were called, having emigrated from Scotland to Ireland, and thence to America; and who were said to possess the impulsiveness of the Irishman, with the dogged resolution of the Covenanter.

The early history of the colony abounds with instances of this spirit among its people. "They always behaved insolently

to their governors," complains Governor Barrington in 1731; "some they have driven out of the country—at other times they set up a government of their own choice, supported by men under arms." It was in fact the spirit of popular liberty and self-government which stirred within them, and gave birth to the glorious axiom: "the rights of the many against the exactions of the few." So ripe was this spirit at an early day, that when the boundary line was run, in 1727, between North Carolina and Virginia, the borderers were eager to be included within the former province, "as there they payed no tribute to God or Cæsar."

It was this spirit which gave rise to the confederacy, called the Regulation, formed to withstand the abuses of power; and the first blood shed in our country, in resistance to arbitrary taxation, was at Almance in this province, in a conflict between the regulators and Governor Tryon. Above all, it should never be forgotten, that at Mecklenburg, in the heart of North Carolina, was fulminated the first declaration of independence of the British crown, upwards of a year before a like declaration by Congress.

A population so characterized presented formidable difficulties to the invader. The physical difficulties arising from the nature of the country consisted in its mountain fastnesses in the north-western part, its vast forests, its sterile tracts, its long rivers, destitute of bridges, and which, though fordable in fair weather, were liable to be swollen by sudden storms and freshets, and rendered deep, turbulent and impassable. These rivers, in fact, which rushed down from the mountain, but wound sluggishly through the plains, were the military strength of the country, as we shall have frequent occasion to show in the course of our narrative.

Lord Cornwallis forbore to attempt the invasion of North Carolina until the summer heats should be over and the harvests gathered in. In the mean time he disposed of his troops in cantonments, to cover the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia, and maintain their internal quiet. The command of the frontiers was given by him to Lord Rawdon, who made Camden his principal post. This town, the capital of Kershaw District, a fertile, fruitful country, was situated on the east bank of the Wateree River, on the road leading to North Carolina. It was to be the grand military depot for the projected campaign.

Having made these dispositions, Lord Cornwallis set up his head-quarters at Charleston, where he occupied himself in regulating the civil and commercial affairs of the province, in organizing the militia of the lower districts, and in forwarding provisions and munitions of war to Camden.

The proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, putting an end to all neutrality, and the rigorous penalties and persecutions with which all infractions of its terms were punished, had for a time quelled the spirit of the country. By degrees, however, the dread of British power gave way to impatience of British exactions. Symptoms of revolt manifested themselves in various parts. They were encouraged by intelligence that De Kalb, sent by Washington, was advancing through North Carolina at the head of two thousand men, and that the militia of that State and of Virginia were joining his standard. This was soon followed by tidings that Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, was on his way to take command of the Southern forces.

The prospect of such aid from the North reanimated the Southern patriots. One of the most eminent of these was Thomas Sumter, whom the Carolinians had surnamed the Game

Cock. He was between forty and fifty years of age, brave, hardy, vigorous, resolute. He had served against the Indians in his boyhood, during the old French war, and had been present at the defeat of Braddock. In the present war he had held the rank of lieutenant-colonel of riflemen in the Continental line. After the fall of Charleston, when patriots took refuge in contiguous States, or in the natural fastnesses of the country, he had retired with his family into one of the latter.

The lower part of South Carolina for upwards of a hundred miles back from the sea is a level country, abounding with swamps, locked up in the windings of the rivers which flow down from the Appalachian Mountains. Some of these swamps are mere canebrakes, of little use until subdued by cultivation, when they yield abundant crops of rice. Others are covered with forests of cypress, cedar and laurel, green all the year and odoriferous, but tangled with vines and almost impenetrable. In their bosoms, however, are fine savannahs; natural lawns, open to cultivation, and yielding abundant pasturage. It requires local knowledge, however, to penetrate these wildernesses, and hence they form strongholds to the people of the country. In one of these natural fastnesses, on the borders of the Santee, Sumter had taken up his residence, and hence he would sally forth in various directions. During a temporary absence his retreat had been invaded, his house burnt to the ground, his wife and children driven forth without shelter. Private injury had thus been added to the incentives of patriotism. Emerging from his hiding-place, he had thrown himself among a handful of his fellow-sufferers who had taken refuge in North Carolina. They chose him at once as a leader, and resolved on a desperate struggle for the deliverance of their native State. Destitute of regular

weapons, they forged rude substitutes out of the implements of husbandry. Old mill-saws were converted into broad-swords; knives at the ends of poles served for lances; while the country housewives gladly gave up their pewter dishes and other utensils, to be melted down and cast into bullets for such as had fire-arms.

When Sumter led this gallant band of exiles over the border, they did not amount in number to two hundred; yet, with these, he attacked and routed a well-armed body of British troops and tories, the terror of the frontier. His followers supplied themselves with weapons from the slain. In a little while his band was augmented by recruits. Parties of militia, also, recently embodied under the compelling measures of Cornwallis, deserted to the patriot standard. Thus reinforced to the amount of six hundred men, he made, on the 30th of July, a spirited attack on the British post at Rocky Mount, near the Catawba, but was repulsed. A more successful attack was made by him, eight days afterwards, on another post at Hanging Rock. The Prince of Wales regiment which defended it was nearly annihilated, and a large body of North Carolina loyalists, under Colonel Brian, was routed and dispersed. The gallant exploits of Sumter were emulated in other parts of the country, and the partisan war thus commenced was carried on with an audacity that soon obliged the enemy to call in their outposts, and collect their troops in large masses.

The advance of De Kalb with reinforcements from the North, had been retarded by various difficulties, the most important of which was want of provisions. This had been especially the case, he said, since his arrival in North Carolina. The legislative or executive power, he complained gave him no assistance,

nor could he obtain supplies from the people but by military force. There was no flour in the camp, nor were dispositions made to furnish any. His troops were reduced for a time to short allowance, and at length, on the 6th of July, brought to a positive halt at Deep River.* The North Carolina militia, under General Caswell, were already in the field, on the road to Camden, beyond the Pedee River. He was anxious to form a junction with them, and with some Virginia troops, under Colonel Porterfield, reliques of the defenders of Charleston; but a wide and sterile region lay between him and them, difficult to be traversed, unless magazines were established in advance, or he were supplied with provisions to take with him. Thus circumstanced, he wrote to Congress and to the State Legislature, representing his situation, and entreating relief. For three weeks he remained in this encampment, foraging an exhausted country for a meagre subsistence, and was thinking of deviating to the right, and seeking the fertile counties of Mecklenburg and Rowan, when, on the 25th of July, General Gates arrived at the camp.

The baron greeted him with a Continental salute from his little park of artillery, and received him with the ceremony and deference due to a superior officer who was to take the command. There was a contest of politeness between the two generals. Gates approved of De Kalb's standing orders, but at the first review of the troops, to the great astonishment of the baron, gave orders for them to hold themselves in readiness to march at a *moment's warning*. It was evident he meant to signalize himself by celerity of movement in contrast with protracted delays.

It was in vain the destitute situation of the troops was repre-

* A branch of Cape Fear river. The aboriginal name Sapporah.

sented to him, and that they had not a day's provision in advance. His reply was, that waggons laden with supplies were coming on, and would overtake them in two days.

On the 27th, he actually put the army in motion over the Buffalo Ford, on the direct road to Camden. Colonel Williams, the adjutant-general of De Kalb, warned him of the sterile nature of that route, and recommended a more circuitous one further north, which the baron had intended to take, and which passed through the abundant county of Mecklenburg. Gates persisted in taking the direct route, observing that he should the sooner form a junction with Caswell and the North Carolina militia; and as to the sterility of the country, his supplies would soon overtake him.

The route proved all that had been represented. It led through a region of pine barrens, sand hills and swamps, with few human habitations, and those mostly deserted. The supplies of which he had spoken never overtook him. His army had to subsist itself on lean cattle, roaming almost wild in the woods; and to supply the want of bread with green Indian corn, unripe apples, and peaches. The consequence was, a distressing prevalance of dysentery.

Having crossed the Pedee River on the 3d of August, the army was joined by a handful of brave Virginia regulars, under Lieutenant-colonel Porterfield, who had been wandering about the country since the disaster of Charleston; and, on the 7th, the much-desired junction took place with the North Carolina militia. On the 13th they encamped at Rugeley's Mills, otherwise called Clermont, about twelve miles from Camden, and on the following day were reinforced by a brigade of seven hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens.

On the approach of Gates, Lord Rawdon had concentrated his forces at Camden. The post was flanked by the Wateree River and Pine-tree Creek, and strengthened with redoubts. Lord Cornwallis had hastened hither from Charleston on learning that affairs in this quarter were drawing to a crisis, and had arrived here on the 13th. The British effective force thus collected was something more than two thousand, including officers. About five hundred were militia and tory refugees from North Carolina.

The forces under Gates, according to the return of his adjutant-general, were three thousand and fifty-two fit for duty; more than two-thirds of them, however, were militia.

On the 14th, he received an express from General Sumter, who, with his partisan corps, after harassing the enemy at various points, was now endeavoring to cut off their supplies from Charleston. The object of the express was to ask a reinforcement of regulars to aid him in capturing a large convoy of clothing, ammunition and stores, on its way to the garrison, and which would pass Wateree Ferry, about a mile from Camden.

Gates accordingly detached Colonel Woolford of the Maryland line, with one hundred regulars, a party of artillery, and two brass field-pieces. On the same evening he moved with his main force to take post at a deep stream about seven miles from Camden, intending to attack Lord Rawdon or his redoubts should he march out in force to repel Sumter.

It seems hardly credible that Gates should have been so remiss in collecting information concerning the movements of his enemy as to be utterly unaware that Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Camden. Such, however, we are assured by his adjutant-general, was the fact.*

* Narrative of Adjutant-General Williams.

By a singular coincidence, Lord Cornwallis on the very same evening sallied forth from Camden to attack the American camp at Clermont.

About two o'clock at night, the two forces blundered, as it were, on each other about half way. A skirmish took place between their advanced guards, in which Porterfield of the Virginia regulars was mortally wounded. Some prisoners were taken on either side. From these the respective commanders learnt the nature of the forces each had stumbled upon. Both halted, formed their troops for action, but deferred further hostilities until daylight.

Gates was astounded at being told that the enemy at hand was Cornwallis with three thousand men. Calling a council of war, he demanded what was best to be done. For a moment or two there was blank silence. It was broken by General Stevens of the Virginia militia, with the significant question, "Gentlemen, is it not too late *now* to do any thing but fight?" No other advice was asked or offered, and all were required to repair to their respective commands,* though General de Kalb, we are told, was of opinion that they should regain their position at Clermont, and there await an attack.

In forming the line, the first Maryland division, including the Delawares, was on the right, commanded by De Kalb. The Virginia militia under Stevens, were on the left. Caswell with the North Carolinians formed the centre. The artillery was in battery on the road. Each flank was covered by a marsh. The second Maryland brigade formed a reserve, a few hundred yards in rear of the first.

* Williams' Narrative.

At daybreak (Aug. 16th), the enemy were dimly descried advancing in column; they appeared to be displaying to the right. The deputy adjutant-general ordered the artillery to open a fire upon them, and then rode to General Gates, who was in the rear of the line, to inform him of the cause of the firing. Gates ordered that Stevens should advance briskly with his brigade of Virginia militia and attack them while in the act of displaying. No sooner did Stevens receive the order than he put his brigade in motion, but discovered that the right wing of the enemy was already in line. A few sharp shooters were detached to run forward, post themselves behind trees within forty or fifty yards of the enemy to extort their fire while at a distance, and render it less terrible to the militia. The expedient failed. The British rushed on shouting and firing. Stevens called to his men to stand firm, and put them in mind of their bayonets. His words were unheeded. The inexperienced militia, dismayed and confounded by this impetuous assault, threw down their loaded muskets and fled. The panic spread to the North Carolina militia. Part of them made a temporary stand, but soon joined with the rest in flight, rendered headlong and disastrous by the charge and pursuit of Tarleton and his cavalry.

Gates, seconded by his officers, made several attempts to rally the militia, but was borne along with them. The day was hazy; there was no wind to carry off the smoke, which hung over the field of battle like a thick cloud. Nothing could be seen distinctly. Supposing that the regular troops were dispersed like the militia, Gates gave all up for lost, and retreated from the field.

The regulars, however, had not given way. The Maryland brigades and the Delaware regiment, unconscious that they were

deserted by the militia, stood their ground, and bore the brunt of the battle. Though repeatedly broken, they as often rallied, and braved even the deadly push of the bayonet. At length a charge of Tarleton's cavalry on their flank threw them into confusion, and drove them into the woods and swamps. None showed more gallantry on this disastrous day than the Baron de Kalb; he fought on foot with the second Maryland brigade, and fell exhausted after receiving eleven wounds. His aide-de-camp, De Buysson, supported him in his arms and was repeatedly wounded in protecting him. He announced the rank and nation of his general, and both were taken prisoners. De Kalb died in the course of a few days, dictating in his last moments a letter expressing his affection for the officers and men of his division who had so nobly stood by him in this deadly strife.

If the militia fled too soon in this battle, said the adjutant-general, the regulars remained too long; fighting when there was no hope of victory.*

General Gates in retreating had hoped to rally a sufficient force at Clermont to cover the retreat of the regulars, but the further they fled, the more the militia were dispersed, until the generals were abandoned by all but their aids. To add to the mortification of Gates, he learned in the course of his retreat that Sumter had been completely successful, and having reduced the enemy's redoubt on the Wateree, and captured one hundred prisoners and forty loaded waggons, was marching off with his booty on the opposite side of the river; apprehending danger from the quarter in which he had heard firing in the morning. Gates had no longer any means of co-operating with him; he

* Williams' Narrative.

sent orders to him, therefore, to retire in the best manner he could; while he himself proceeded with General Caswell towards the village of Charlotte, about sixty miles distant.

Cornwallis was apprehensive that Sumter's corps might form a rallying point to the routed army. On the morning of the 17th of August, therefore, he detached Tarleton in pursuit with a body of cavalry and light infantry, about three hundred and fifty strong. Sumter was retreating up the western side of the Wateree, much encumbered by his spoils and prisoners. Tarleton pushed up by forced and concealed marches on the eastern side. Horses and men suffered from the intense heat of the weather. At dusk Tarleton descried the fires of the American camp about a mile from the opposite shore. He gave orders to secure all boats on the river, and to light no fire in the camp. In the morning his sentries gave word that the Americans were quitting their encampment. It was evident they knew nothing of a British force being in pursuit of them. Tarleton now crossed the Wateree; the infantry with a three-pounder passed in boats; the cavalry swam their horses where the river was not fordable. The delay in crossing, and the diligence of Sumter's march, increased the distance between the pursuers and the pursued. About noon a part of Tarleton's force gave out through heat and fatigue. Leaving them to repose on the bank of Fishing Creek, he pushed on with about one hundred dragoons, the freshest and most able; still marching with great circumspection. As he entered a valley, a discharge of small-arms from a thicket tumbled a dragoon from his saddle. His comrades galloped up to the place, and found two American videttes whom they sabred before Tarleton could interpose. A sergeant and five dragoons rode up to the summit of a neighboring hill to reconnoitre.

Crouching on their horses they made signs to Tarleton. He cautiously approached the crest of the hill, and looking over beheld the American camp on a neighboring height, and apparently in a most negligent condition.

Sumter, in fact, having pressed his retreat to the neighborhood of the Catawba Ford, and taken a strong position at the mouth of Fishing Creek, and his patrols having scoured the road without discovering any signs of an enemy, considered himself secure from surprise. The two shots fired by his videttes had been heard, but were supposed to have been made by militia shooting cattle. The troops having for the last four days been almost without food or sleep, were now indulged in complete relaxation. Their arms were stacked, and they were scattered about, some strolling, some lying on the grass under the trees, some bathing in the river. Sumter himself had thrown off part of his clothes on account of the heat of the weather.

Having well reconnoitred this negligent camp, indulging in summer supineness and sultry repose, Tarleton prepared for instant attack. His cavalry and infantry formed into one line dashed forward with a general shout, and, before the Americans could recover from their surprise, got between them and the parade ground on which the muskets were stacked.

All was confusion and consternation in the American camp. Some opposition was made from behind baggage waggons, and there was skirmishing in various quarters, but in a little while there was a universal flight to the river and the woods. Between three and four hundred were killed and wounded; all their arms and baggage with two brass field-pieces fell into the hands of the enemy, who also recaptured the prisoners and booty taken at Camden. Sumter with about three hundred and fifty of his men

effected a retreat; he galloped off, it is said, without saddle, hat or coat.

Gates, on reaching the village of Charlotte, had been joined by some fugitives from his army. He continued on to Hillsborough, one hundred and eighty miles from Camden, where he made a stand and endeavored to rally his scattered forces. His regular troops, however, were little more than one thousand. As to the militia of North and South Carolina, they had dispersed to their respective homes, depending upon the patriotism and charity of the farmers along the road for food and shelter.

It was not until the beginning of September that Washington received word of the disastrous reverse at Camden. The shock was the greater, as previous reports from that quarter had represented the operations a few days preceding the action as much in our favor. It was evident to Washington that the course of war must ultimately tend to the Southern States, yet the situation of affairs in the North did not permit him to detach any sufficient force for their relief. All that he could do for the present was to endeavor to hold the enemy in check in that quarter. For this purpose, he gave orders that some regular troops, enlisted in Maryland for the war, and intended for the main army, should be sent to the southward. He wrote to Governor Rutledge of South Carolina (12th September), to raise a permanent, compact, well-organized body of troops, instead of depending upon a numerous army of militia, always "inconceivably expensive, and too fluctuating and undisciplined" to oppose a regular force. He was still more urgent and explicit on this head in his letters to the President of Congress (Sept 15th). "Regular troops alone," said he, "are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence; and

whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous. No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single instance, that can justify a different opinion; and it is most earnestly to be wished, that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence. * * * * In my ideas of the true system of war at the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army, rather than a large one. Every exertion should be made by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to raise a permanent force of six thousand men, exclusive of horse and artillery. These, with the occasional aid of the militia in the vicinity of the scene of action, will not only suffice to prevent the further progress of the enemy, but, if properly supplied, to oblige them to compact their force and relinquish a part of what they now hold. To expel them from the country entirely is what we cannot aim at, till we derive more effectual support from abroad; and by attempting too much, instead of going forward, we shall go backward. Could such a force be once set on foot, it would immediately make an inconceivable change in the face of affairs not only in the opposition to the enemy, but in expense, consumption of provisions, and waste of arms and stores. No magazines can be equal to the demands of an army of militia, and none need economy more than ours."

He had scarce written the foregoing, when he received a letter from the now unfortunate Gates, dated at Hillsborough. Aug. 30th and Sept. 3d, giving particulars of his discomfiture. No longer vaunting and vainglorious, he pleads nothing but his

patriotism, and deprecates the fall which he apprehends awaits him. The appeal which he makes to Washington's magnanimity to support him in this day of his reverse, is the highest testimonial he could give to the exalted character of the man whom he once affected to underrate, and aspired to supplant.

"Anxious for the public good," said he, "I shall continue my unwearied endeavors to stop the progress of the enemy, reinstate our affairs, recommence an offensive war, and recover all our losses in the Southern States. But if being unfortunate is solely a reason sufficient for removing me from command, I shall most cheerfully submit to the orders of Congress, and resign an office which few generals would be anxious to possess, and where the utmost skill and fortitude are subject to be baffled by difficulties, which must for a time surround the chief in command here. That your Excellency may meet with no such difficulties, that your road to fame and fortune may be smooth and easy, is the sincere wish of your most humble servant."

Again: "If I can yet render good service to the United States, it will be necessary it should be seen that I have the support of Congress, and of your Excellency; otherwise, some men may think they please my superiors by blaming me, and thus recommend themselves to favor. But you, sir, will be too generous to lend an ear to such men, if such there be, and will show your greatness of soul rather by protecting than slighting the unfortunate."

Washington in his reply, while he acknowledged the shock and surprise caused by the first account of the unexpected event, did credit to the behavior of the Continental troops. "The accounts," added he, "which the enemy give of the action, show that their victory was dearly bought. Under present circum-

stances, the system which you are pursuing seems to be extremely proper. It would add no good purpose to take a position near the enemy while you are so far inferior in force. If they can be kept in check by the light irregular troops under Colonel Sumter and other active officers, they will gain nothing by the time which must be necessarily spent by you in collecting and arranging the new army, forming magazines, and replacing the stores which were lost in the action."

Washington still cherished the idea of a combined attack upon New York as soon as a French naval force should arrive. The destruction of the enemy here would relieve this part of the Union from an internal war, and enable its troops and resources to be united with those of France in vigorous efforts against the common enemy elsewhere. Hearing, therefore, that the Count de Guichen, with his West India squadron, was approaching the coast, Washington prepared to proceed to Hartford in Connecticut, there to hold a conference with the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, and concert a plan for future operations, of which the attack on New York was to form the principal feature.

CHAPTER IX.

TREASON OF ARNOLD—HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE ENEMY—HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH ANDRÉ—PARTING SCENE WITH WASHINGTON—MIDNIGHT CONFERENCE ON THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON—RETURN OF ANDRÉ BY LAND—CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS CAPTURE.

We have now to enter upon a sad episode of our revolutionary history—the treason of Arnold. Of the military skill, daring enterprise, and indomitable courage of this man—ample evidence has been given in the foregoing pages. Of the implicit confidence reposed in his patriotism by Washington, sufficient proof is manifested in the command with which he was actually entrusted. But Arnold was false at heart, and, at the very time of seeking that command, had been for many months in traitorous correspondence with the enemy.

The first idea of proving recreant to the cause he had vindicated so bravely, appears to have entered his mind when the charges preferred against him by the council of Pennsylvania were referred by Congress to a court-martial. Before that time he had been incensed against Pennsylvania; but now his wrath was excited against his country, which appeared so insensible to his services. Disappointment in regard to the settlement of his accounts, added to his irritation, and mingled sordid motives with his resentment; and he began to think how, while he wreaked

his vengeance on his country, he might do it with advantage to his fortunes. With this view he commenced a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in a disguised handwriting, and, under the signature of *Gustavus*, representing himself as a person of importance in the American service, who, being dissatisfied with the late proceedings of Congress, particularly the alliance with France, was desirous of joining the cause of Great Britain, could he be certain of personal security, and indemnification for whatever loss of property he might sustain. His letters occasionally communicated articles of intelligence of some moment which proved to be true, and induced Sir Henry to keep up the correspondence; which was conducted on his part by his aide-de-camp, Major John André, likewise in a disguised hand, and under the signature of John Anderson.

Months elapsed before Sir Henry discovered who was his secret correspondent. Even after discovering it he did not see fit to hold out any very strong inducements to Arnold for desertion. The latter was out of command, and had nothing to offer but his services; which in his actual situation were scarcely worth buying.

In the mean time the circumstances of Arnold were daily becoming more desperate. Debts were accumulating, and creditors becoming more and more importunate, as his means to satisfy them decreased. The public reprimand he had received was rankling in his mind, and filling his heart with bitterness. Still he hesitated on the brink of absolute infamy, and attempted a half-way leap. Such was his proposition to M. de Luzerne to make himself subservient to the policy of the French government, on condition of receiving a loan equal to the amount of his debts. This he might have reconciled to his conscience by the idea that

France was an ally, and its policy likely to be friendly. It was his last card before resorting to utter treachery. Failing in it, his desperate alternative was to get some important command, the betrayal of which to the enemy might obtain for him a munificent reward.

He may possibly have had such an idea in his mind some time previously, when he sought the command of a naval and military expedition, which failed to be carried into effect; but such certainly was the secret of his eagerness to obtain the command of West Point, the great object of British and American solicitude, on the possession of which were supposed by many to hinge the fortunes of the war.

He took command of the post and its dependencies about the beginning of August, fixing his head-quarters at Beverley, a country-seat a little below West Point, on the opposite or eastern side of the river. It stood in a lonely part of the Highlands, high up from the river, yet at the foot of a mountain covered with woods. It was commonly called the Robinson House, having formerly belonged to Washington's early friend, Colonel Beverley Robinson, who had obtained a large part of the Phillipse estate in this neighborhood, by marrying one of the heiresses. Colonel Robinson was a royalist; had entered into the British service, and was now residing in New York, and Beverley with its surrounding lands had been confiscated.

From this place Arnold carried on a secret correspondence with Major André. Their letters, still in disguised hands, and under the names of Gustavus and John Anderson, purported to treat merely of commercial operations, but the real matter in negotiation was the betrayal of West Point and the Highlands to Sir Henry Clinton. This stupendous piece of treachery was

WEST POINT WITH THE FORTIFICATIONS &c IN 1780

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to be consummated at the time when Washington, with the main body of his army, would be drawn down towards King's Bridge, and the French troops landed on Long Island, in the projected co-operation against New York. At such time, a flotilla under Rodney, having on board a large land force, was to ascend the Hudson to the Highlands, which would be surrendered by Arnold almost without opposition, under pretext of insufficient force to make resistance. The immediate result of this surrender, it was anticipated, would be the defeat of the combined attempt upon New York; and its ultimate effect might be the dismemberment of the Union and the dislocation of the whole American scheme of warfare.

We have before had occasion to mention Major André, but the part which he took in this dark transaction, and the degree of romantic interest subsquently thrown around his memory, call for a more specific notice of him. He was born in London 1751, but his parents were of Geneva in Switzerland, where he was educated. Being intended for mercantile life, he entered a London counting-house, but had scarce attained his eighteenth year when he formed a romantic attachment to a beautiful girl, Miss Honora Sneyd, by whom his passion was returned, and they became engaged. This sadly unfitted him for the sober routine of the counting-house. "All my mercantile calculations," writes he in one of his boyish letters, "go to the tune of dear Honora."

The father of the young lady interfered, and the premature match was broken off. André abandoned the counting-house and entered the army. His first commission was dated March 4, 1771; but he subsequently visited Germany, and returned to England in 1773, still haunted by his early passion. His lady love, in the mean time, had been wooed by other admirers, and

in the present year became the second wife of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, a young widower of twenty-six.*

André came to America in 1774, as lieutenant of the Royal English Fusileers; and was among the officers captured at Saint Johns, early in the war, by Montgomery. He still bore about with him a memento of his boyish passion, the "dear talisman," as he called it, a miniature of Miss Sneyd painted by himself in 1769. In a letter to a friend, soon after his capture, he writes, "I have been taken prisoner by the Americans, and stripped of every thing except the picture of Honora, which I concealed in my mouth. Preserving that, I yet think myself fortunate."

His temper, however, appears to have been naturally light and festive; and if he still cherished this "tender remembrance," it was but as one of those documents of early poetry and romance, which serve to keep the heart warm and tender among the gay and cold realities of life. What served to favor the idea was a little song which he had composed when in Philadelphia, commencing with the lines,

> Return enraptured hours
> When Delia's heart was mine;

and which was supposed to breathe the remembrance of his early and ill-requited passion.†

His varied and graceful talents, and his engaging manners, rendered him generally popular; while his devoted and somewhat subservient loyalty recommended him to the favor of his commander, and obtained him, without any distinguished mili-

* Father, by his first marriage, of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth.

† Composed at the request of Miss Rebecca Redman.

tary services, the appointment of adjutant-general with the rank of major. He was a prime promoter of elegant amusement in camp and garrison; manager, actor, and scene painter in those amateur theatricals in which the British officers delighted. He was one of the principal devisers of the Mischianza in Philadelphia, in which semi-effeminate pageant he had figured as one of the knights champions of beauty; Miss Shippen, afterwards Mrs. Arnold, being the lady whose peerless charms he undertook to vindicate. He held, moreover, a facile, and at times, satirical pen, and occasionally amused himself with caricaturing in rhyme the appearance and exploits of the "rebel officers."

André had already employed that pen in a furtive manner, after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British; having carried on a correspondence with the leaders of a body of loyalists near the waters of the Chesapeake, who were conspiring to restore the royal government.* In the present instance he had engaged, nothing loth, in a service of intrigue and manœuvre, which, however sanctioned by military usage, should hardly have invited the zeal of a high-minded man. We say manœuvre, because he appears to have availed himself of his former intimacy with Mrs. Arnold, to make her an unconscious means of facilitating a correspondence with her husband. Some have inculpated her in the guilt of the transaction, but we think, unjustly. It has been alleged that a correspondence had been going on between her and André previous to her marriage, and was kept up after it; but as far as we can learn, only one letter passed between them, written by André in August 16th, 1779, in which he solicits her remembrance, assures her that respect for her and

* Simcoe's Military Journal, p. 153, 4.

the fair circle in which he had become acquainted with her, remains unimpaired by distance or political broils, reminds her that the Mischianza had made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her with supplies in that department. "I shall be glad," adds he sportively, "to enter into the whole detail of cap wire, needles, gauze, &c., and to the best of my abilities render you, in these trifles, services from which I hope you would infer a zeal to be further employed." The apparent object of this letter was to open a convenient medium of communication, which Arnold might use without exciting her suspicion.

Various circumstances connected with this nefarious negotiation, argue lightness of mind and something of debasing alloy on the part of André. The correspondence carried on for months in the jargon of traffic, savored less of the camp than the counting-house; the protracted tampering with a brave but necessitous man for the sacrifice of his fame and the betrayal of his trust, strikes us as being beneath the range of a truly chivalrous nature.

Correspondence had now done its part in the business; for the completion of the plan and the adjustment of the traitor's recompense, a personal meeting was necessary between Arnold and André. The former proposed that it should take place at his own quarters at the Robinson House, where André should come in disguise, as a bearer of intelligence, and under the feigned name of John Anderson. André positively objected to entering the American lines; it was arranged, therefore, that the meeting should take place on neutral ground, near the American out-posts, at Dobbs Ferry, on the 11th of September, at 12 o'clock. André attended at the appointed place and time, accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson, who was acquainted

with the plot. An application of the latter for the restoration of his confiscated property in the Highlands, seemed to have been used occasionally as a blind in these proceedings.

Arnold had passed the preceding night at what was called the White House, the residence of Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, situated on the west side of the Hudson, in Haverstraw Bay, about two miles below Stony Point. He set off thence in his barge for the place of rendezvous; but, not being protected by a flag, was fired upon and pursued by the British guard-boats stationed near Dobbs Ferry. He took refuge at an American post on the western shore, whence he returned in the night to his quarters in the Robinson House. Lest his expedition should occasion some surmise, he pretended, in a note to Washington, that he had been down the Hudson to arrange signals in case of any movement of the enemy upon the river.

New arrangements were made for an interview, but it was postponed until after Washington should depart for Hartford, to hold the proposed conference with Count Rochambeau and the other French officers. In the mean time, the British sloop of war, Vulture, anchored a few miles below Teller's Point, to be at hand in aid of the negotiation. On board was Colonel Robinson, who, pretending to believe that General Putnam still commanded in the Highlands, addressed a note to him requesting an interview on the subject of his confiscated property. This letter he sent by a flag, enclosed in one addressed to Arnold; soliciting of him the same boon should General Putnam be absent.

On the 18th Sept., Washington with his suite crossed the Hudson to Verplanck's Point, in Arnold's barge, on his way to Hartford. Arnold accompanied him as far as Peekskill, and on the way, laid before him with affected frankness, the letter of

Colonel Robinson, and asked his advice. Washington disapproved of any such interview, observing, that the civil authorities alone had cognizance of these questions of confiscated property.

Arnold now openly sent a flag on board of the Vulture, as if bearing a reply to the letter he had communicated to the commander-in-chief. By this occasion he informed Colonel Robinson, that a person with a boat and flag would be alongside of the Vulture, on the night of the 20th; and that any matter he might wish to communicate, would be laid before General Washington on the following Saturday, when he might be expected back from Newport.

On the faith of the information thus covertly conveyed, André proceeded up the Hudson on the 20th, and went on board of the Vulture, where he found Colonel Robinson, and expected to meet Arnold. The latter, however, had made other arrangements, probably with a view to his personal security. About half-past eleven, of a still and starlight night (the 21st), a boat was descried from on board, gliding silently along, rowed by two men with muffled oars. She was hailed by an officer on watch, and called to account. A man, seated in the stern, gave out that they were from King's Ferry, bound to Dobbs Ferry. He was ordered alongside, and soon made his way on board. He proved to be Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, already mentioned, whom Arnold had prevailed upon to go on board of the Vulture, and bring a person on shore who was coming from New York with important intelligence. He had given him passes to protect him and those with him, in case he should be stopped, either in going or returning, by the American water guard, which patrolled the river in whale-boats. He had made him the bearer of a letter addressed

to Colonel Beverley Robinson, which was to the following purport: "This will be delivered to you by Mr. Smith, who will conduct you to a place of safety. Neither Mr. Smith nor any other person shall be made acquainted with your proposals; if they (which I doubt not) are of such a nature, that I can officially take notice of them, I shall do it with pleasure. I take it for granted Colonel Robinson will not propose any thing, that is not for the interest of the United States as well as of himself." All this use of Colonel Robinson's name was intended as a blind, should the letter be intercepted.

Robinson introduced André to Smith by the name of John Anderson, who was to go on shore in his place (he being unwell), to have an interview with General Arnold. André wore a blue great coat which covered his uniform, and Smith always declared that at the time he was totally ignorant of his name and military character. Robinson considered this whole nocturnal proceeding full of peril, and would have dissuaded André, but the latter was zealous in executing his mission, and, embarking in the boat with Smith, was silently rowed to the western side of the river, about six miles below Stony Point. Here they landed a little after midnight, at the foot of a shadowy mountain called the Long Clove; a solitary place, the haunt of the owl and the whippoorwill, and well fitted for a treasonable conference.

Arnold was in waiting, but standing aloof among thickets. He had come hither on horseback from Smith's house, about three or four miles distant, attended by one of Smith's servants, likewise mounted. The midnight negotiation between André and Arnold was carried on in darkness among the trees. Smith remained in the boat, and the servant drew off to a distance with the horses. One hour after another passed away, when Smith

approached the place of conference, and gave warning that it was near daybreak, and if they lingered much longer the boat would be discovered.

The nefarious bargain was not yet completed, and Arnold feared the sight of a boat going to the Vulture might cause suspicion. He prevailed therefore upon André to remain on shore until the following night. The boat was accordingly sent to a creek higher up the river, and André, mounting the servant's horse, set off with Arnold for Smith's house. The road passed through the village of Haverstraw. As they rode along in the dark, the voice of a sentinel demanding the countersign startled André with the fearful conviction that he was within the American lines, but it was too late to recede. It was daybreak when they arrived at Smith's house.

They had scarcely entered when the booming of cannon was heard from down the river. It gave André uneasiness, and with reason. Colonel Livingston, who commanded above at Verplanck's Point, learning that the Vulture lay within shot of Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, had sent a party with cannon to that point in the night, and they were now firing upon the sloop of war. André watched the cannonade with an anxious eye from an upper window of Smith's house. At one time he thought the Vulture was on fire. He was relieved from painful solicitude when he saw the vessel weigh anchor, and drop down the river out of reach of cannon shot.

After breakfast, the plot for the betrayal of West Point and its dependent posts was adjusted, and the sum agreed upon that Arnold was to receive, should it be successful. André was furnished with plans of the works, and explanatory papers, which,

at Arnold's request, he placed between his stockings and his feet; promising, in case of accident, to destroy them.

All matters being thus arranged, Arnold prepared to return in his own barge to his head-quarters at the Robinson House. As the Vulture had shifted her ground, he suggested to André a return to New York by land, as most safe and expeditious; the latter, however, insisted upon being put on board of the sloop of war, on the ensuing night. Arnold consented; but, before his departure, to provide against the possible necessity of a return by land, he gave André the following pass, dated from the Robinson House:

"Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the guards to the White Plains, or below, if he chooses; he being on public business by my direction.

B. Arnold, M. Genl."

Smith also, who was to accompany him, was furnished with passports to proceed either by water or by land.

Arnold departed about ten o'clock. André passed a lonely day, casting many a wistful look toward the Vulture. Once on board of that ship he would be safe; he would have fulfilled his mission; the capture of West Point would be certain, and his triumph would be complete. As evening approached he grew impatient, and spoke to Smith about departure. To his surprise, he found the latter had made no preparation for it; he had discharged his boatmen, who had gone home: in short, he refused to take him on board of the Vulture. The cannonade of the morning had probably made him fear for his personal safety, should he attempt to go on board, the Vulture having resumed

her exposed position. He offered, however, to cross the river with André at King's Ferry, put him in the way of returning to New York by land, and accompany him some distance on horseback.

André was in an agony at finding himself, notwithstanding all his stipulations, forced within the American lines; but there seemed to be no alternative, and he prepared for the hazardous journey.

He wore, as we have noted, a military coat under a long blue surtout; he was now persuaded to lay it aside, and put on a citizen's coat of Smith's; thus adding disguise to the other humiliating and hazardous circumstances of the case.

It was about sunset when André and Smith, attended by a negro servant of the latter, crossed from King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point. After proceeding about eight miles on the road toward White Plains, they were stopped between eight and nine o'clock, near Crompond, by a patrolling party. The captain of it was uncommonly inquisitive and suspicious. The passports with Arnold's signature satisfied him. He warned them, however, against the danger of proceeding further in the night. Cow Boys from the British lines were scouring the country, and had recently marauded the neighborhood. Smith's fears were again excited, and André was obliged to yield to them. A bed was furnished them in a neighboring house, where André passed an anxious and restless night, under the very eye, as it were, of an American patrol.

At daybreak he awoke Smith, and hurried their departure, and his mind was lightened of a load of care, when he found himself out of the reach of the patrol and its inquisitive commander.

They were now approaching that noted part of the country, heretofore mentioned as the Neutral Ground, extending north and south about thirty miles, between the British and American lines. A beautiful region of forest-clad hills, fertile valleys, and abundant streams, but now almost desolated by the scourings of Skinners and Cow Boys; the former professing allegiance to the American cause, the latter to the British, but both arrant marauders.

One who had resided at the time in this region, gives a sad picture of its state. Houses plundered and dismantled; enclosures broken down; cattle carried away; fields lying waste; the roads grass-grown; the country mournful, solitary, silent—reminding one of the desolation presented in the song of Deborah. "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked in by-paths. The inhabitants of the villages ceased; they ceased in Israel." *

About two and a half miles from Pine's Bridge, on the Croton River, André and his companion partook of a scanty meal at a farm-house which had recently been harried by the Cow Boys. Here they parted, Smith to return home, André to pursue his journey alone to New York. His spirits, however, were cheerful; for, having got beyond the patrols, he considered the most perilous part of his route accomplished.

About six miles beyond Pine's Bridge he came to a place where the road forked, the left branch leading toward White Plains in the interior of the country, the right inclining toward the Hudson. He had originally intended to take the left hand

* See Dwight's Travels, vol. iii.

road, the other being said to be infested by Cow Boys. These, however, were not to be apprehended by him, as they belonged to the lower party or British; it led, too, more directly to New York; so he turned down it, and took his course along the river road.

He had not proceeded far, when coming to a place where a small stream crossed the road and ran into a woody dell, a man stepped out from the trees, levelled a musket and brought him to a stand, while two other men similarly armed, showed themselves prepared to second their comrade.

The man who had first stepped out wore a refugee uniform. At sight of it, André's heart leapt, and he felt himself secure. Losing all caution, he exclaimed eagerly: "Gentlemen, I hope you belong to our party?"—"What party?" was asked.—"The lower party," said André.—"We do," was the reply. All reserve was now at an end. André declared himself to be a British officer; that he had been up the country on particular business, and must not be detained a single moment. He drew out his watch as he spoke. It was a gold one, and served to prove to them that he was what he represented himself, gold watches being seldom worn in those days, excepting by persons of consequence.

To his consternation, the supposed refugee now avowed himself and his companions to be Americans, and told André he was their prisoner!

It was even so. The sacking and burning of Young's House, and the carrying of its rustic defenders into captivity, had roused the spirit of the Neutral Ground. The yeomanry of that harassed country had turned out in parties to intercept freebooters from the British lines, who had recently been on the maraud, and might be returning to the city with their spoils. One of

these parties, composed of seven men of the neighborhood, had divided itself. Four took post on a hill above Sleepy Hollow, to watch the road which crossed the country; the other three, John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams by name, stationed themselves on the road which runs parallel to the Hudson. Two of them were seated on the grass playing at cards to pass away the time, while one mounted guard.

The one in refugee garb who brought André to a stand, was John Paulding, a stout-hearted youngster, who, like most of the young men of this outraged neighborhood, had been repeatedly in arms to repel or resent aggressions, and now belonged to the militia. He had twice been captured and confined in the loathsome military prisons, where patriots suffered in New York, first in the North Dutch Church, and last in the noted Sugar House. Both times he had made his escape; the last time, only four days previous to the event of which we are treating. The ragged refugee coat, which had deceived André, and been the cause of his betraying himself, had been given to Paulding by one of his captors, in exchange for a good yeoman garment of which they stripped him.* This slight circumstance may have produced the whole discovery of the treason.

André was astounded at finding into what hands he had fallen; and how he had betrayed himself by his heedless avowal. Promptly, however, recovering his self-possession, he endeavored to pass off his previous account of himself as a mere subterfuge. "A man must do any thing," said he laughingly, "to get along." He now declared himself to be a Continental officer, going down

* Stated on the authority of Commodore Hiram Paulding, a son of the captor, who heard it repeatedly from the lips of his father.

to Dobbs Ferry to get information from below; so saying, he drew forth and showed them the pass of General Arnold.

This, in the first instance, would have been sufficient; but his unwary tongue had ruined him. The suspicions of his captors were completely roused. Seizing the bridle of his horse, they ordered him to dismount. He warned them that he was on urgent business for the general, and that they would get themselves into trouble should they detain him. "We care not for that," was the reply, as they led him among the thickets, on the border of the brook.

Paulding asked whether he had any letters about him. He answered, no. They proceeded to search him. A minute description is given of his dress. He wore a round hat, a blue surtout, a crimson close-bodied coat, somewhat faded: the buttonholes worked with gold, and the buttons covered with gold lace, a nankeen vest, and small-clothes and boots.

They obliged him to take off his coat and vest, and found on him eighty dollars in Continental money, but nothing to warrant suspicion of any thing sinister, and were disposed to let him proceed, when Paulding exclaimed: "Boys, I am not satisfied—his boots must come off."

At this André changed color. His boots, he said, came off with difficulty, and he begged he might not be subjected to the inconvenience and delay. His remonstrances were in vain. He was obliged to sit down: his boots were drawn off, and the concealed papers discovered. Hastily scanning them, Paulding exclaimed, "My God! He is a spy!"

He demanded of André where he had gotten these papers.

"Of a man at Pine's Bridge, a stranger to me," was the reply.

While dressing himself, André endeavored to ransom himself from his captors; rising from one offer to another. He would give any sum of money if they would let him go. He would give his horse, saddle, bridle, and one hundred guineas, and would send them to any place that might be fixed upon.

Williams asked him if he would not give more.

He replied, that he would give any reward they might name either in goods or money, and would remain with two of their party while one went to New York to get it.

Here Paulding broke in and declared with an oath, that if he would give ten thousand guineas, he should not stir one step.*

The unfortunate André now submitted to his fate, and the captors set off with their prisoner for North Castle, the nearest American post, distant ten or twelve miles. They proceeded across a hilly and woody region, part of the way by the road, part across fields. One strode in front, occasionally holding the horse by the bridle, the others walked on either side. André rode on in silence, declining to answer further questions until he should come before a military officer. About noon, they halted at a farm house where the inhabitants were taking their mid-day repast. The worthy housewife, moved by André's prepossessing appearance and dejected air, kindly invited him to partake. He declined, alleging that he had no appetite. Glancing at his gold-laced crimson coat, the good dame apologized for her rustic fare. "Oh, madam," exclaimed poor André with a melancholy shake of the head, "it is all very good—but, indeed, I cannot eat!"

This was related to us by a venerable matron, who was pres-

* Testimony of David Williams.

ent on the occasion, a young girl at the time, but who in her old days could not recall the scene and the appearance of André without tears.

The captors with their prisoner being arrived at North Castle, Lieutenant-colonel Jameson, who was in command there, recognized the handwriting of Arnold in the papers found upon André, and, perceiving that they were of a dangerous nature, sent them off by express to General Washington, at Hartford.

André, still adhering to his assumed name, begged that the commander at West Point might be informed that John Anderson, though bearing his passport, was detained.

Jameson appears completely to have lost his head on the occasion. He wrote to Arnold, stating the circumstances of the arrest, and that the papers found upon the prisoner had been despatched by express to the commander-in-chief, and at the same time, he sent the prisoner himself, under a strong guard, to accompany the letter.*

Shortly afterwards, Major Tallmadge, next in command to Jameson, but of a much clearer head, arrived at North Castle, having been absent on duty to White Plains. When the circumstances of the case were related to him, he at once suspected treachery on the part of Arnold. At his earnest entreaties, an express was sent after the officer who had André in charge, ordering him to bring the latter back to North Castle; but by singular perversity or obtuseness in judgment, Jameson neglected to countermand the letter which he had written to Arnold.

When André was brought back, and was pacing up and down the room, Tallmadge saw at once by his air and movements, and

* Sparks' Arnold. We would note generally, that we are indebted to Mr. Sparks' work for many particulars given by us of this tale of treason.

the mode of turning on his heel, that he was a military man. By his advice, and under his escort, the prisoner was conducted to Colonel Sheldon's post at Lower Salem, as more secure than North Castle.

Here André, being told that the papers found upon his person had been forwarded to Washington, addressed to him immediately the following lines:

"I beg your Excellency will be persuaded that no alteration in the temper of my mind or apprehensions for my safety, induces me to take the step of addressing you; but that it is to secure myself from the imputation of having assumed a mean character for treacherous purposes or self-interest. * * It is to vindicate my fame that I speak, and not to solicit security.

"The person in your possession is Major John André, adjutant-general of the British army.

"The influence of one commander in the army of his adversary is an advantage taken in war. A correspondence for this purpose I held; as confidential (in the present instance) with his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton. To favor it, I agreed to meet upon ground not within the posts of either army, a person who was to give me intelligence. I came up in the Vulture man-of-war for this effect, and was fetched from the shore to the beach. Being there, I was told that the approach of day would prevent my return, and that I must be concealed until the next night. I was in my regimentals, and had fairly risked my person.

"Against my stipulation, my intention, and without my knowledge beforehand, I was conducted within one of your posts. Thus was I betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy within your posts.

"Having avowed myself a British officer, I have nothing to

reveal but what relates to myself, which is true, on the honor of an officer and a gentleman.

"The request I have made to your Excellency, and I am conscious that I address myself well, is, that in any rigor policy may dictate, a decency of conduct towards me may mark, that, though unfortunate, I am branded with nothing dishonorable; as no motive could be mine, but the service of my king, and as I was involuntarily an impostor."

This letter he submitted to the perusal of Major Tallmadge, who was surprised and agitated at finding the rank and importance of the prisoner he had in charge. The letter being despatched, and André's pride relieved on a sensitive point, he resumed his serenity, apparently unconscious of the awful responsibility of his situation. Having a talent for caricature, he even amused himself in the course of the day by making a ludicrous sketch of himself and his rustic escort under march, and presenting it to an officer in the room with him. "This," said he gayly, "will give you an idea of the style in which I have had the honor to be conducted to my present abode."

NOTE.

André's propensity for caricature had recently been indulged in a mock heroic poem in three cantos, celebrating an attack upon a British picket by Wayne, with the driving into the American camp of a drove of cattle by Lee's dragoons. It is written with great humor, and is full of grotesque imagery. "Mad Anthony" especially is in broad caricature, and represented to have lost his horse upon the great occasion."

His horse that carried all his prog,
His military speeches,
His corn-stalk whiskey for his grog—
Blue stockings and brown breeches.

The cantos were published at different times in Rivington's Gazette. It so

happened that the last canto appeared on the very day of André's capture, and ended with the following stanza, which might be considered ominous :—

And now I've closed my epic strain,
I tremble as I show it,
Lest this same warrio-drover, Wayne,
Should ever catch the poet.

CHAPTER X.

INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON WITH THE FRENCH OFFICERS AT HARTFORD—PLAN OF ATTACK DISCONCERTED—WASHINGTON'S RETURN—SCENES AT ARNOLD'S HEAD-QUARTERS IN THE HIGHLANDS—TIDINGS OF ANDRÉ'S CAPTURE—FLIGHT OF ARNOLD—LETTERS FROM THE TRAITOR—WASHINGTON'S PRECAUTIONS—SITUATION OF MRS. ARNOLD.

On the very day that the treasonable conference between Arnold and André took place, on the banks of Haverstraw Bay, Washington had his interview with the French officers at Hartford. It led to no important result. Intelligence was received that the squadron of the Count de Guichen, on which they had relied to give them superiority by sea, had sailed for Europe. This disconcerted their plans, and Washington, in consequence, set out two or three days sooner than had been anticipated on his return to his head-quarters on the Hudson. He was accompanied by Lafayette and General Knox with their suites; also, part of the way, by Count Matthew Dumas, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau. The count, who regarded Washington with an enthusiasm which appears to have been felt by many of the young French officers, gives an animated picture of the manner in which he was greeted in one of the towns through which they passed. "We arrived there," says he, "at night; the whole population had sallied forth beyond the suburbs. We were surrounded by a crowd of

children carrying torches, and reiterating the acclamations of the citizens; all were eager to touch the person of him whom they hailed with loud cries as their father, and they thronged before us so as almost to prevent our moving onward. General Washington, much affected, paused a few moments, and pressing my hand, 'We may be beaten by the English,' said he, 'it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer!'"

These few words speak that noble confidence in the enduring patriotism of his countrymen, which sustained him throughout all the fluctuating fortunes of the Revolution; yet at this very moment it was about to receive one of the cruellest of wounds.

On approaching the Hudson, Washington took a more circuitous route than the one he had originally intended, striking the river at Fishkill just above the Highlands, that he might visit West Point, and show the marquis the works which had been erected there during his absence in France. Circumstances detained them a night at Fishkill. Their baggage was sent on to Arnold's quarters in the Robinson House, with a message apprising the general that they would breakfast there the next day. In the morning (Sept. 24th) they were in the saddle before break of day, having a ride to make of eighteen miles through the mountains. It was a pleasant and animated one. Washington was in excellent spirits, and the buoyant marquis, and genial, warm-hearted Knox, were companions with whom he was always disposed to unbend.

When within a mile of the Robinson House, Washington turned down a cross road leading to the banks of the Hudson. Lafayette apprised him that he was going out of the way, and hinted that Mrs. Arnold must be waiting breakfast for him.

"Ah, marquis!" replied he good-humoredly, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, but will be with her shortly."

The marquis and General Knox, however, turned off and accompanied him down to the redoubts, while Colonel Hamilton and Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major James McHenry, continued along the main road to the Robinson House, bearing Washington's apology, and request that the breakfast might not be retarded.

The family with the two aides-de-camp sat down to breakfast. Mrs. Arnold had arrived but four or five days previously from Philadelphia, with her infant child, then about six months old. She was bright and amiable as usual. Arnold was silent and gloomy. It was an anxious moment with him. This was the day appointed for the consummation of the plot, when the enemy's ships were to ascend the river. The return of the commander-in-chief from the East two days sooner than had been anticipated, and his proposed visit to the forts, threatened to disconcert every thing. What might be the consequence Arnold could not conjecture. An interval of fearful imaginings was soon brought to a direful close. In the midst of the repast a horseman alighted at the gate. It was the messenger bearing Jameson's letter to Arnold, stating the capture of André, and that dangerous papers found on him had been forwarded to Washington.

The mine had exploded beneath Arnold's feet; yet in this awful moment he gave an evidence of that quickness of mind which had won laurels for him when in the path of duty. Con-

trolling the dismay that must have smitten him to the heart, he beckoned Mrs. Arnold from the breakfast table, signifying a wish to speak with her in private. When alone with her in her room up stairs, he announced in hurried words that he was a ruined man, and must instantly fly for his life! Overcome by the shock, she fell senseless on the floor. Without pausing to aid her, he hurried down stairs, sent the messenger to her assistance, probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers; returned to the breakfast room, and informed his guests that he must haste to West Point to prepare for the reception of the commander-in-chief; and mounting the horse of the messenger, which stood saddled at the door, galloped down by what is still called Arnold's Path, to the landing-place, where his six-oared barge was moored. Throwing himself into it, he ordered his men to pull out into the middle of the river, and then made down with all speed for Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, saying he must be back soon to meet the commander-in-chief.

Washington arrived at the Robinson House shortly after the flight of the traitor. Being informed that Mrs. Arnold was in her room, unwell, and that Arnold had gone to West Point to receive him, he took a hasty breakfast, and repaired to the fortress, leaving word that he and his suite would return to dinner.

In crossing the river, he noticed that no salute was fired from the fort, nor was there any preparation to receive him on his landing. Colonel Lamb, the officer in command, who came down to the shore, manifested surprise at seeing him, and apologized for this want of military ceremony, by assuring him he had not been apprised of his intended visit.

"Is not General Arnold here?" demanded Washington.

"No, sir. He has not been here for two days past; nor have I heard from him in that time."

This was strange and perplexing, but no sinister suspicion entered Washington's mind. He remained at the Point throughout the morning inspecting the fortifications. In the mean time, the messenger whom Jameson had despatched to Hartford with a letter covering the papers taken on André, arrived at the Robinson House. He had learnt, while on the way to Hartford, that Washington had left that place, whereupon he turned bridle to overtake him, but missed him in consequence of the general's change of route. Coming by the lower road, the messenger had passed through Salem, where André was confined, and brought with him the letter written by that unfortunate officer to the commander-in-chief, the purport of which has already been given. These letters being represented as of the utmost moment, were opened and read by Colonel Hamilton, as Washington's aide-de-camp and confidential officer. He maintained silence as to their contents; met Washington, as he and his companions were coming up from the river, on their return from West Point, spoke to him a few words in a low voice, and they retired together into the house. Whatever agitation Washington may have felt when these documents of deep-laid treachery were put before him, he wore his usual air of equanimity when he rejoined his companions. Taking Knox and Lafayette aside, he communicated to them the intelligence, and placed the papers in their hands. "Whom can we trust now?" was his only comment, but it spoke volumes.

His first idea was to arrest the traitor. Conjecturing the direction of his flight, he despatched Colonel Hamilton on horseback to spur with all speed to Verplanck's Point, which com-

mands the narrow part of the Hudson, just below the Highlands, with orders to the commander to intercept Arnold should he not already have passed that post. This done, when dinner was announced, he invited the company to table. "Come, gentlemen; since Mrs. Arnold is unwell, and the general is absent, let us sit down without ceremony." The repast was a quiet one, for none but Lafayette and Knox, beside the general, knew the purport of the letters just received.

In the mean time, Arnold, panic-stricken, had sped his caitiff flight through the Highlands; infamy howling in his rear; arrest threatening him in the advance; a fugitive past the posts which he had recently commanded; shrinking at the sight of that flag which hitherto it had been his glory to defend! Alas! how changed from the Arnold, who, but two years previously, when repulsed, wounded and crippled, before the walls of Quebec, could yet write proudly from a shattered camp, "I am in the way of my duty, and I know no fear!"

He had passed through the Highlands in safety, but there were the batteries at Verplanck's Point yet to fear. Fortunately for him, Hamilton, with the order for his arrest, had not arrived there.

His barge was known by the garrison. A white handkerchief displayed gave it the sanction of a flag of truce: it was suffered to pass without question, and the traitor effected his escape to the Vulture sloop-of-war, anchored a few miles below. As if to consummate his degradation by a despicable act of treachery and meanness, he gave up to the commander his coxswain and six bargemen as prisoners of war. We are happy to add, that this perfidy excited the scorn of the British officers; and, when it was found that the men had supposed they were

acting under the protection of a flag, they were released by order of Sir Henry Clinton.

Colonel Hamilton returned to the Robinson House and reported the escape of the traitor. He brought two letters also to Washington, which had been sent on shore from the Vulture, under a flag of truce. One was from Arnold, of which the following is a transcript:

"Sir,—The heart which is conscious of its own rectitude, cannot attempt to palliate a step which the world may censure as wrong; I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contest between Great Britain and the colonies; the same principle of love to my country actuates my present conduct, however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who seldom judge right of any man's actions.

"I ask no favor for myself. I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it; but, from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me; she is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me as she may choose; from your Excellency I have no fears on her account, but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country."

The other letter was from Colonel Beverley Robinson, interceding for the release of André, on the plea that he was on shore under the sanction of a flag of truce, at the request of Arnold.

Robinson had hoped to find favor with Washington on the score of their early intimacy.

Notwithstanding Washington's apparent tranquillity and real self-possession, it was a time of appalling distrust. How far the treason had extended; who else might be implicated in it, was unknown. Arnold had escaped, and was actually on board of the Vulture; he knew every thing about the condition of the posts: might he not persuade the enemy, in the present weak state of the garrisons, to attempt a *coup de main?* Washington instantly, therefore, despatched a letter to Colonel Wade, who was in temporary command at West Point. "General Arnold is gone to the enemy," writes he. "I have just now received a line from him enclosing one to Mrs. Arnold, dated on board of the Vulture. I request that you will be as vigilant as possible, and as the enemy may have it in contemplation to attempt some enterprise, *even to-night*, against these posts, I wish you to make, immediately after the receipt of this, the best disposition you can of your force, so as to have a proportion of men in each work on the west side of the river."

A regiment stationed in the Highlands was ordered to the same duty, as well as a body of the Massachusetts militia from Fishkill. At half-past seven in the evening, Washington wrote to General Greene, who, in his absence, commanded the army at Tappan; urging him to put the left division in motion as soon as possible, with orders to proceed to King's Ferry, where, or before they should arrive there, they would be met with further orders. "The division," writes he, "will come on light, leaving their heavy baggage to follow. You will also hold all the troops in readiness to move on the shortest notice. Transactions of a most

interesting nature, and such as will astonish you, have been just discovered."

His next thought was about André. He was not acquainted with him personally, and the intrigues in which he had been engaged, and the errand on which he had come, made him consider him an artful and resolute person. He had possessed himself of dangerous information, and in a manner had been arrested with the key of the citadel in his pocket. On the same evening, therefore, Washington wrote to Colonel Jameson, charging that every precaution should be taken to prevent Major André from making his escape. "He will no doubt effect it, if possible; and in order that he may not have it in his power, you will send him under the care of such a party and so many officers as to preclude him from the least opportunity of doing it. That he may be less liable to be recaptured by the enemy, who will no doubt make every effort to regain him, he had better be conducted to this place by some upper road, rather than by the route of Crompond. I would not wish Mr. André to be treated with insult; but he does not appear to stand upon the footing of a common prisoner of war, and therefore, he is not entitled to the usual indulgences which they receive, and is to be most closely and narrowly watched."

In the mean time, Mrs. Arnold remained in her room in a state bordering on frenzy. Arnold might well confide in the humanity and delicacy of Washington in respect to her. He regarded her with the sincerest commiseration, acquitting her of all previous knowledge of her husband's guilt. On remitting to her, by one of his aides-de-camp, the letter of her husband, written from on board of the Vulture, he informed her that he had done all that depended upon himself to have him arrested, but

not having succeeded, he experienced a pleasure in assuring her of his safety.*

A letter of Hamilton's written at the time, with all the sympathies of a young man, gives a touching picture of Washington's first interview with her. "She for a time entirely lost herself. The general went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears, sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occasioned by the imprudence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all the fondness of a mother, showed themselves in her appearance and conduct."

During the brief time she remained at the Robinson House, she was treated with the utmost deference and delicacy, but soon set off, under a passport of Washington, for her father's house in Philadelphia.

* Memoirs of Lafayette, i., p. 264.

CHAPTER XI.

ANDRÉ'S CONDUCT AS A PRISONER—HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH COLONEL TALLMADGE—STORY OF NATHAN HALE—ANDRÉ'S PRISON AT TAPPAN—CORRESPONDENCE ON HIS BEHALF—HIS TRIAL—EXECUTION—REWARD OF THE CAPTORS—REWARD OF ARNOLD—HIS PROCLAMATION—AFTER FORTUNES OF MRS. ARNOLD.

On the 26th of September, the day after the treason of Arnold had been revealed to Washington, André arrived at the Robinson House, having been brought on in the night, under escort and in charge of Major Tallmadge. Washington made many inquiries of the major, but declined to have the prisoner brought into his presence, apparently entertaining a strong idea of his moral obliquity, from the nature of the scheme in which he had been engaged, and the circumstances under which he had been arrested.

The same evening he transmitted him to West Point, and shortly afterwards, Joshua H. Smith, who had likewise been arrested. Still, not considering them secure even there, he determined on the following day to send them on to the camp. In a letter to Greene he writes: "They will be under an escort of horse, and I wish you to have separate houses in camp ready for their reception, in which they may be kept perfectly secure; and also strong, trusty guards, trebly officered, that a part may be

constantly in the room with them. They have not been permitted to be together, and must be kept apart. I would wish the room for Mr. André to be a decent one, and that he may be treated with civility; but that he may be so guarded as to preclude a possibility of his escaping, which he will certainly attempt to effect, if it shall seem practicable in the most distant degree."

Major Tallmadge continued to have the charge of André. Not regarding him from the same anxious point with the commander-in-chief, and having had opportunities of acquiring a personal knowledge of him, he had become fascinated by his engaging qualities. "The ease and affability of his manners," writes he, "polished by the refinement of good society and a finished education, made him a most delightful companion. It often drew tears from my eyes, to find him so agreeable in conversation on different subjects, when I reflected on his future fate, and that too, as I feared, so near at hand."

Early on the morning of the 28th, the prisoners were embarked in a barge, to be conveyed from West Point to King's Ferry. Tallmadge placed André by his side on the after seat of the barge. Being both young, of equal rank, and prepossessing manners, a frank and cordial intercourse had grown up between them. By a cartel, mutually agreed upon, each might put to the other any question not involving a third person. They were passing below the rocky heights of West Point, and in full view of the fortress, when Tallmadge asked André whether he would have taken an active part in the attack on it, should Arnold's plan have succeeded. André promptly answered in the affirmative; pointed out a table of land on the west shore, where he would have landed at the head of a select corps, described the

route he would have taken up the mountain to a height in the rear of Fort Putnam, overlooking the whole parade of West Point—"and this he did," writes Tallmadge, "with much greater exactness than I could have done. This eminence he would have reached without difficulty, as Arnold would have disposed of the garrison in such manner as to be capable of little or no opposition—*and then the key of the country would have been in his hands, and he would have had the glory of the splendid achievement.*"

Tallmadge fairly kindled into admiration as André, with hereditary French vivacity, acted the scene he was describing. "It seemed to him," he said, "as if André were entering the fort sword in hand."

He ventured to ask what was to have been his reward had he succeeded. "Military glory was all he sought. The thanks of his general and the approbation of his king would have been a rich reward for such an undertaking."

Tallmadge was perfectly charmed, but adds quietly, "I think he further remarked, that, if he had succeeded, *he was to have been promoted to the rank of a brigadier-general.*"

While thus the prisoner, confident of the merit of what he had attempted, kindled with the idea of an imaginary triumph, and the youthful officer who had him in charge, caught fire from his enthusiasm, the barge glided through that solemn defile of mountains, through which, but a few days previously, Arnold, the panic-stricken traitor of the drama, had fled like a felon.

After disembarking at King's Ferry near Stony Point, they set off for Tappan under the escort of a body of horse. As they approached the Clove, a deep defile in the rear of the Highlands, André, who rode beside Tallmadge, became solicitous to know

the opinion of the latter as to what would be the result of his capture, and in what light he would be regarded by General Washington and by a military tribunal, should one be ordered. Tallmadge evaded the question as long as possible, but being urged to a full and explicit reply, gave it, he says, in the following words: "I had a much-loved classmate in Yale College, by the name of Nathan Hale, who entered the army in 1775. Immediately after the battle of Long Island, General Washington wanted information respecting the strength, position, and probable movements of the enemy. Captain Hale tendered his services, went over to Brooklyn, and was taken, just as he was passing the outposts of the enemy on his return; said I with emphasis—'Do you remember the sequel of the story?' 'Yes,' said André. 'He was hanged as a spy! But you surely do not consider his case and mine alike?' 'Yes, precisely similar; and similar will be your fate.'" *

* The fate of the heroic youth here alluded to, deserves a more ample notice. Born in Coventry, Connecticut, June 6th, 1755, he entered Yale College in 1770, and graduated with some distinction in September, 1773, having previously contracted an engagement of marriage; not unlike André in this respect, who wooed his "Honora" at eighteen. On quitting college he engaged as a teacher, as is common with young men in New England, while studying for a profession. His half-formed purpose was to devote himself to the ministry. As a teacher of youth, he was eminently skilful, and equally appreciated by parents and pupils. He became universally popular. "Every body loved him," said a lady of his acquaintance, "he was so sprightly, intelligent and kind, and *so* handsome."

He was teaching at New London, when an express arrived, bringing tidings of the outbreak at Lexington. A town meeting was called, and Hale was among the most ardent of the speakers, proposing an instant march to the scene of hostilities, and offering to volunteer. "A sense of duty," writes he to his father, "urges me to sacrifice every thing for my country."

He served in the army before Boston as a Lieutenant; prevailed on his company to extend their term of service by offering them his own pay, and for his

"He endeavored," adds Tallmadge, "to answer my remarks, but it was manifest he was more troubled in spirit than I had ever seen him before."

"We stopped at the Clove to dine and let the horse-guard refresh," continues Tallmadge. "While there, André kept reviewing his shabby dress, and finally remarked to me, that he was positively ashamed to go to the head-quarters of the American army in such a plight. I called my servant and directed him to bring my dragoon cloak, which I presented to Major André.

good conduct received from Congress the commission of captain. He commanded a company in Colonel Knowlton's regiment in the following year. After the disastrous battle of Long Island, Washington applied to that officer for a competent person to penetrate the enemy's camp, and procure intelligence of their designs; a service deemed vital in that dispiriting crisis. Hale, in the ardor of patriotism, volunteered for the unenviable enterprise, though fully aware of its peril, and the consequences of capture.

Assuming his old character as schoolmaster, he crossed the Sound at night from Norwalk to Huntington on Long Island, visited the British encampments unsuspected, made drawings of the enemy's works, and noted down memoranda in Latin of the information he gathered, and then retraced his steps to Huntington, where a boat was to meet him and convey him back to the Connecticut shore. Unfortunately a British guard ship was at that time anchored out of view in the Sound, and had sent a boat on shore for water. Hale mistook it for the expected boat, and did not discover his mistake until he found himself in the hands of enemies. He was stripped and searched, the plans and memoranda were found concealed in the soles of his shoes, and proved him to be a spy.

He was conveyed to the guard ship, and thence to New York, where he was landed on the 21st of September, the day of the great fire. He was taken to General Howe's head-quarters, and, after brief parley with his judge, ordered for execution the next morning at daybreak—a sentence carried out by the provost marshal, the brutal and infamous Cunningham, who refused his request for a Bible, and destroyed a letter he had addressed to his mother, for the reason afterwards given by himself, "that the rebels should never know they had a man who could die with such firmness." His patriot spirit shone forth in his dying words,—"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

This he refused to take for some time; but I insisted on it, and he finally put it on and rode in it to Tappan."

The place which had been prepared to receive Major André, is still pointed out as the "76 Stone House." The caution which Washington had given as to his safe keeping, was strictly observed by Colonel Scammel, the adjutant-general, as may be seen by his orders to the officer of the guards.

"Major André, the prisoner under your guard, is not only an officer of distinction in the British army, but a man of infinite art and address, who will leave no means unattempted to make his escape and avoid the ignominious death which awaits him. You are therefore, in addition to your sentries, to keep two officers constantly in the room with him, with their swords drawn, whilst the other officers who are out of the room are constantly to keep walking the entry and around the sentries, to see that they are alert. No person whatever to be permitted to enter the room, or speak with him, unless by direction of the commander-in-chief. You are by no means to suffer him to go out of the room on any pretext whatever." *

The capture of André caused a great sensation at New York. He was universally popular with the army, and an especial favorite of Sir Henry Clinton. The latter addressed a letter to Washington on the 29th, claiming the release of André on similar ground to that urged by Colonel Robinson—his having visited Arnold at the particular request of that general officer, and under the sanction of a flag of truce; and his having been stopped while travelling under Arnold's passports. The same letter inclosed one addressed by Arnold to Sir Henry, and intended as a

* From a copy among the papers of General Hand.

kind of certificate of the innocence of André. "I commanded at the time at West Point," writes the renegade, "had an undoubted right to send my flag of truce to Major André, who came to me under that protection, and, having held conversation with him, I delivered him confidential papers in my own handwriting to deliver to your Excellency. Thinking it much properer he should return by land, I directed him to make use of the feigned name of John Anderson, under which he had, by my direction, come on shore, and gave him my passports to go to the White Plains, on his way to New York. * * * * All which I had then a right to do, being in the actual service of America, under the orders of General Washington, and commanding general at West Point and its dependencies." He concludes, therefore, that André cannot fail of being immediately sent to New York.

Neither the official demand of Sir Henry Clinton, nor the impudent certificate of Arnold, had any effect on the steady mind of Washington. He considered the circumstances under which André had been taken such as would have justified the most summary proceedings, but he determined to refer the case to the examination and decision of a board of general officers, which he convened on the 29th of September, the day after his arrival at Tappan. It was composed of six major-generals, Greene, Stirling, St. Clair, Lafayette, R. Howe, and Steuben; and eight brigadiers, Parsons, James Clinton, Knox, Glover, Paterson, Hand, Huntingdon, and Stark. General Greene, who was well versed in military law, and was a man of sound head and kind heart, was president, and Colonel John Lawrence, judge advocate-general.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who, like Tallmadge, had

drawn to André in his misfortunes, as had most of the young American officers, gives, in letters to his friends, many interesting particulars concerning the conduct of the prisoner. "When brought before the board of officers," writes he, "he met with every mark of indulgence, and was required to answer no interrogatory which would even embarrass his feelings. On his part, while he carefully concealed every thing that might implicate others, he frankly confessed all the facts relating to himself, and upon his confession, without the trouble of examining a witness, the board made up their report."

It briefly stated the circumstances of the case, and concluded with the opinion of the court, that Major André, adjutant-general of the British army, ought to be considered a spy from the enemy, and, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, ought to suffer death. In a conversation with Hamilton, André acknowledged the candor, liberality, and indulgence with which the board had conducted themselves in their painful inquiry. He met the result with manly firmness. "I foresee my fate," said he; "and though I pretend not to play the hero, or to be indifferent about life, yet I am reconciled to whatever may happen; conscious that misfortune, not guilt, has brought it upon me."

Even in this situation of gathering horrors, he thought of others more than of himself. "There is only one thing that disturbs my tranquillity," said he to Hamilton. "Sir Henry Clinton has been too good to me; he has been lavish of his kindness. I am bound to him by too many obligations, and love him too well, to bear the thought that he should reproach himself, or others should reproach him, on the supposition of my having conceived myself obliged, by his instructions, to run the risk I did. I would not for the world leave a sting in his mind that should

embitter his future days." He could scarce finish the sentence; bursting into tears, in spite of his efforts to suppress them, and with difficulty collected himself enough afterwards to add, "I wish to be permitted to assure him that I did not act under this impression, but submitted to a necessity imposed upon me, as contrary to my own inclination, as to his wishes."

His request was complied with, and he wrote a letter to Sir Henry Clinton to the above purport. He made mention also of his mother and three sisters, to whom the value of his commission would be an object. "It is needless," said he, "to be more explicit on this subject; I am persuaded of your Excellency's goodness." *

He concluded by saying, "I receive the greatest attention from his Excellency, General Washington, and from every person under whose charge I happen to be placed."

This letter accompanied one from Washington to Sir Henry Clinton, stating the report of the board of inquiry, omitting the sentence. "From these proceedings," observes he, "it is evident that Major André was employed in the execution of measures very foreign to the objects of flags of truce, and such as they were never meant to authorize in the most distant degree; and this gentleman confessed with the greatest candor, in the course of his examination, that it was impossible for him to suppose that he came on shore under the sanction of a flag."

Captain Aaron Ogden, a worthy officer of the New Jersey

* The commission was sold by Sir Henry Clinton, for the benefit of André's mother and sisters. The King, also, settled a pension on the mother, and offered to confer the honor of knighthood on André's brother, in order to wipe away all stain from the family, that the circumstance of his fate might be thought to occasion.

line, was selected by Washington to bear these dispatches to the enemy's post at Paulus Hook, thence to be conveyed across the Hudson to New York. Before his departure, he called by Washington's request on the Marquis Lafayette, who gave him instructions to sound the officer commanding at that post whether Sir Henry Clinton might not be willing to deliver up Arnold in exchange for André. Ogden arrived at Paulus Hook in the evening, and made the suggestion, as if incidentally, in the course of conversation. The officer demanded if he had any authority from Washington for such an intimation. "I have no such assurance from General Washington," replied he, "but I am prepared to say, that if such a proposal were made, I believe it would be accepted, and Major André set at liberty."

The officer crossed the river before morning, and communicated the matter to Sir Henry Clinton, but the latter instantly rejected the expedient as incompatible with honor and military principle.

In the mean time, the character, appearance, deportment and fortunes of André, had interested the feelings of the oldest and sternest soldiers around him, and completely captivated the sympathies of the younger ones. He was treated with the greatest respect and kindness throughout his confinement, and his table was supplied from that of the commander-in-chief.

Hamilton, who was in daily intercourse with him, describes him as well improved by education and travel, with an elegant turn of mind, and a taste for the fine arts. He had attained some proficiency in poetry, music, and painting. His sentiments were elevated, his elocution was fluent, his address easy, polite and engaging, with a softness that conciliated affection. His talents and accomplishments were accompanied, says Hamilton, by

a diffidence that induced you to give him credit for more than appeared.

No one felt stronger sympathy in his case than Colonel Tallmadge, no doubt from the consideration that he had been the means of bringing him into this awful predicament, by inducing Colonel Jameson to have him conducted back when on the way to Arnold's quarters. A letter lies before us, written by Tallmadge to Colonel Samuel B. Webb, one of Washington's aides-de-camp. "Poor André, who has been under my charge almost ever since he was taken, has yesterday had his trial, and though his sentence is not known, a disgraceful death is undoubtedly allotted him. By heavens, Colonel Webb, I never saw a man whose fate I foresaw whom I so sincerely pitied. He is a young fellow of the greatest accomplishments, and was the prime minister of Sir Harry on all occasions. He has unbosomed his heart to me so fully, and indeed let me know almost every motive of his actions since he came out on his late mission, that he has endeared me to him exceedingly. Unfortunate man! He will undoubtedly suffer death to-morrow; and though he knows his fate, seems to be as cheerful as if he were going to an assembly. I am sure he will go to the gallows less fearful for his fate, and with less concern than I shall behold the tragedy. Had he been tried by a court of ladies, he is so genteel, handsome, polite a young gentleman, that I am confident they would have acquitted him. But enough of André, who, though he dies lamented, falls justly."

The execution was to have taken place on the 1st of October, at five o'clock in the afternoon; but in the interim Washington received a second letter from Sir Henry Clinton, dated September 30th, expressing an opinion that the board of inquiry had not been rightly informed of all the circumstances on which a judg-

ment ought to be formed, and that, in order that he might be perfectly apprised of the state of the matter before he proceeded to put that judgment in execution, he should send a commission on the following day, composed of Lieutenant-governor Elliot, William Smith, chief justice of the province, and Lieutenant-general Robinson, to wait near Dobbs Ferry for permission and safe conduct to meet Washington, or such persons as he should appoint to converse with them on the subject.

This letter caused a postponement of the execution, and General Greene was sent to meet the commissioners at Dobbs Ferry. They came up in the morning of the 1st of October, in a schooner, with a flag of truce, and were accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson. General Robertson, however, was the only commissioner permitted to land, the others not being military officers. A long conference took place between him and General Greene, without any agreement of opinion upon the question at issue. Greene returned to camp promising to report faithfully to Washington the arguments urged by Robertson, and to inform the latter of the result.

A letter also was delivered to Greene for Washington, which Arnold had sent by the commissioners, in which the traitor reasserted the right he had possessed, as commanding officer of the department, to transact all the matters with which André was inculpated, and insisted that the latter ought not to suffer for them. "But," added he, "if after this just and candid representation of Major André's case, the board of general officers adhere to their former opinion, I shall suppose it dictated by passion and resentment; and if that gentleman should suffer the severity of their sentence, I shall think myself bound, by every tie of duty and honor, to retaliate on such unhappy persons of

your army as may fall within my power, that the respect due to flags, and to the laws of nations, may be better understood and observed. I have further to observe, that forty of the principal inhabitants of South Carolina have justly forfeited their lives, which have hitherto been spared by the clemency of his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, who cannot in justice extend his mercy to them any longer, if Major André suffers; which, in all probability, will open a scene of blood at which humanity shudders.

"Suffer me to entreat your Excellency, for your own sake and the honor of humanity, and the love you have of justice, that you suffer not an unjust sentence to touch the life of Major André. But if this warning should be disregarded, and he suffer, I call Heaven and earth to witness, that your Excellency will be justly answerable for the torrent of blood that may be spilt in consequence."

Beside this impudent and despicable letter, there was another from Arnold containing the farce of a resignation, and concluding with the following sentence: "At the same time I beg leave to assure your Excellency, that my attachment to the true interests of my country is invariable, and that I am actuated by the same principle which has ever been the governing rule of my conduct in this unhappy contest."

The letters of Arnold were regarded with merited contempt. Greene, in a brief letter to General Robertson, informed him that he had made as full a report of their conference to the commander-in-chief, as his memory would serve, but that it had made no alteration in Washington's opinion and determination. Robertson was piqued at the brevity of the note, and professed to doubt whether Greene's memory had served him with sufficient fulness and exactness; he addressed therefore to Washington his own

statement of his reasoning on the subject; after despatching which he and the other commissioners returned in the schooner to New York.

During this day of respite André had conducted himself with his usual tranquillity. A likeness of himself, seated at a table in his guard-room, which he sketched with a pen and gave to the officer on guard, is still extant. It being announced to him that one o'clock on the following day was fixed on for his execution, he remarked, that since it was his lot to die, there was still a choice in the mode; he therefore addressed the following note to Washington:

"Sir:—Buoyed above the terror of death by the consciousness of a life devoted to honorable pursuits, and stained with no action that can give me remorse, I trust that the request I make to your Excellency at this serious period, and which is to soften my last moments, will not be rejected. Sympathy towards a soldier will surely induce your Excellency and a military tribunal to adapt the mode of my death to the feelings of a man of honor.

"Let me hope, sir, that if aught in my character impresses you with esteem towards me; if aught in my misfortunes marks me as the victim of policy and not of resentment, I shall experience the operation of these feelings in your breast by being informed that I am not to die on a gibbet."

Had Washington consulted his feelings merely, this affecting appeal might not have been in vain, for, though not impulsive, he was eminently benevolent. André himself had testified to the kind treatment he had experienced from the commander-in-chief since his capture, though no personal interview had taken place. Washington had no popular censure to apprehend should he exercise indulgence, for the popular feeling was with the prisoner.

But he had a high and tenacious sense of the duties and responsibilities of his position, and never more than in this trying moment, when he had to elevate himself above the contagious sympathies of those around him, dismiss all personal considerations, and regard the peculiar circumstances of the case. The long course of insidious operations which had been pursued to undermine the loyalty of one of his most trusted officers; the greatness of the evil which the treason would have effected, if successful; the uncertainty how far the enemy had carried, or might still be carrying, their scheme of corruption, for anonymous intimations spoke of treachery in other quarters; all these considerations pointed this out as a case in which a signal example was required.

And what called for particular indulgence to the agent, if not instigator of this enormous crime, who had thus been providentially detected in disguise, and with the means of its consummation concealed upon his person? His errand, as it has been eloquently urged, "viewed in the light of morality, and even of that chivalry from which modern war pretends to derive its maxims, was one of infamy. He had been commissioned to buy with gold what steel could not conquer; to drive a bargain with one ready for a price to become a traitor; to count out the thirty pieces of silver by which British generals and British gentlemen were not ashamed to purchase the betrayal of a cause, whose shining virtue repelled their power, and dimmed the glory of their arms." *

Even the language of traffic in which this negotiation had been carried on between the pseudo-Gustavus and John Ander-

* Speech of the Hon. Henry J. Raymond, at the dedication of the André monument.

son, had, as has before been observed, something ignoble and debasing to the chivalrous aspirant who stooped to use it; especially when used as a crafty covering in bargaining for a man's soul.*

It has been alleged in André's behalf, as a mitigating circumstance, that he was involuntarily a spy. It is true, he did not come on shore in borrowed garb, nor with a design to pass himself off for another, and procure secret information; but he came, under cloak of midnight, in supposed safety, to effect the betrayal of a holy trust; and it was his undue eagerness to secure the objects of this clandestine interview, that brought him into the condition of an undoubted spy. It certainly should not soften our view of his mission, that he embarked in it without intending to subject himself to danger. A spice of danger would have given it a spice of heroism, however spurious. When the rendezvous was first projected, he sought, through an indirect channel, to let Arnold know that he would come out with a flag. (We allude to a letter written by him from New York on the 7th of September, under his feigned signature, to Colonel Sheldon; evidently intended to be seen by Arnold; "I will endeavor to obtain permission to go out with a flag.") If an interview had taken place under that sacred protection, and a triumphant treason had been the result, what a brand it would have affixed to André's name, that he had prostituted a flag of truce to such an end.

* See letter of Gustavus to John Anderson. "My partner of whom I hinted in a former letter, has about ten thousand pounds cash in hand, ready for a speculation, if any should offer; I have also one thousand pounds in hand, and can collect fifteen hundred more in two or three days. Add to this, I have some credit. From these hints you can judge of the purchase that can be made."

We dwell on these matters, not to check the sentiment of sympathy awakened in André's behalf by his personal qualities, but to vindicate the fair name of Washington from that "blot" which some have attempted to cast upon it, because, in exercising his stern duty as protector of the public weal, during a time of secret treason, he listened to policy and justice rather than mercy. In doing so, he took counsel with some of his general officers. Their opinions coincided with his own—that under present circumstances, it was important to give a signal warning to the enemy, by a rigorous observance of the rules of war and the usages of nations in like cases.*

But although André's request as to the mode of his death was not to be granted, it was thought best to let him remain in uncertainty on the subject; no answer, therefore, was returned to his note. On the morning of the 2d, he maintained a calm demeanor, though all around him were gloomy and silent. He even rebuked his servant for shedding tears. Having breakfasted, he dressed himself with care in the full uniform of a British officer, which he had sent for to New York, placed his hat upon the table, and accosting the officers on guard—"I am ready," said he, "at any moment, gentlemen, to wait upon you."

* We subjoin a British officer's view of André's case. "He was tried by a board of general officers as a spy, and condemned to be hanged. The American general has been censured for directing this ignominious sentence to be carried into execution; but doubtless Major André was well aware when he undertook the negotiation, of the fate that awaited him should he fall into the hands of the enemy. The laws of war award to spies the punishment of death. It would, therefore, be difficult to assign a reason why Major André should have been exempted from that fate to which all others are doomed under similar circumstances, although the amiable qualities of the man rendered the individual case a subject of peculiar commiseration."—*Origin and Services of the Coldstream Guards:* by Col. MacKinnon, vol. ii., p. 9.

He walked to the place of execution between two subaltern officers, arm in arm, with a serene countenance, bowing to several gentlemen whom he knew. Colonel Tallmadge accompanied him, and we quote his words. "When he came within sight of the gibbet, he appeared to be startled, and inquired with some emotion whether he was not to be shot. Being informed that the mode first appointed for his death could not consistently be altered, he exclaimed, 'How hard is my fate!' but immediately added, 'it will soon be over.' I then shook hands with him under the gallows, and retired." *

While waiting near the gallows until preparations were made, says another authority, who was present, he evinced some nervousness, putting his foot on a stone and rolling it; and making an effort to swallow, as if checking an hysterical affection of the throat. All things being ready, he stepped into the waggon; appeared to shrink for an instant, but recovering himself, exclaimed: "It will be but a momentary pang!"

Taking off his hat and stock, and opening his shirt collar, he deliberately adjusted the noose to his neck, after which he took out a handkerchief, and tied it over his eyes. Being told by the officer in command that his arms must be bound, he drew out a second handkerchief, with which they were pinioned. Colonel Scammel now told him that he had an opportunity to speak, if he desired it. His only reply was, "I pray you to bear witness that I meet my fate like a brave man." The waggon moved from under him, and left him suspended. He died almost without a struggle.† He remained suspended for about half an hour, dur-

* MSS. of Col. B. Tallmadge in possession of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Cushman, of Troy, N. Y.

† Thatcher's Military Journal, p. 275.

ing which time a deathlike stillness prevailed over the surrounding multitude. His remains were interred within a few yards of the place of his execution; whence they were transferred to England in 1821, by the British consul, then resident in New York, and were buried in Westminster Abbey, near a mural monument which had been erected to his memory.

Never has any man, suffering under like circumstances, awakened a more universal sympathy even among those of the country against which he had practised. His story is one of the touching themes of the Revolution, and his name is still spoken of with kindness in the local traditions of the neighborhood where he was captured.

Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, passed a high eulogium on the captors of André, and recommended them for a handsome gratuity; for having, in all probability, prevented one of the severest strokes that could have been meditated by the enemy. Congress accordingly expressed, in a formal vote, a high sense of their virtuous and patriotic conduct; awarded to each of them a farm, a pension for life of two hundred dollars, and a silver medal, bearing on one side an escutcheon on which was engraved the word FIDELITY, and on the other side the motto, *Vincit amor Patriæ*. These medals were delivered to them by General Washington at head-quarters, with impressive ceremony.

Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors, had been present at the execution of André, and was deeply affected by it. He was not fond of recalling the subject, and in after life could rarely speak of André without tears.

Joshua H. Smith, who aided in bringing André and Arnold together, was tried by a court-martial, on a charge of participating in the treason, but was acquitted, no proof appearing of his

having had any knowledge of Arnold's plot, though it was thought he must have been conscious of something wrong in an interview so mysteriously conducted.

Arnold was now made brigadier-general in the British service, and put on an official level with honorable men who scorned to associate with the traitor. What golden reward he was to have received had his treason been successful, is not known; but six thousand three hundred and fifteen pounds sterling were paid to him, as a compensation for losses which he pretended to have suffered in going over to the enemies of his country.

The vilest culprit, however, shrinks from sustaining the obloquy of his crimes. Shortly after his arrival in New York, Arnold published an address to the Inhabitants of America, in which he endeavored to vindicate his conduct. He alleged that he had originally taken up arms merely to aid in obtaining a redress of grievances. He had considered the Declaration of Independence precipitate, and the reasons for it obviated, by the subsequent proffers of the British government; and he inveighed against Congress for rejecting those offers, without submitting them to the people.

Finally, the treaty with France, a proud, ancient and crafty foe, the enemy of the Protestant faith and of real liberty, had completed, he said, the measure of his indignation, and determined him to abandon a cause sustained by iniquity and controlled by usurpers.

Besides this address, he issued a proclamation inviting the officers and soldiers of the American army, who had the real interest of their country at heart, and who were determined to be no longer the tools and dupes of Congress, and of France, to rally under the royal standard, and fight for true American liberty;

holding out promises of large bounties and liberal subsistence, with compensation for all the implements and accoutrements of war they might bring with them.

Speaking of this address, "I am at a loss," said Washington, "which to admire most, the confidence of Arnold in publishing it, or the folly of the enemy in supposing that a production signed by so infamous a character will have any weight with the people of these States, or any influence upon our officers abroad." He was right. Both the address and the proclamation were regarded by Americans with the contempt they merited. None rallied to the standard of the renegade but a few deserters and refugees, who were already within the British lines, and prepared for any desperate or despicable service.*

* The following passages of a letter written by Sir Thomas Romilly in London, Dec. 12, 1780, to the Rev. John Roget, are worthy of citation:

"What do you think of Arnold's conduct? you may well suppose he does not want advocates here. I cannot join with them. If he thought the Americans not justified in continuing the war, after the offer of such favorable terms as the commissioners held out to them, why did he keep his command for two years afterwards? * * * *

"The arguments used by Clinton and Arnold in their letters to Washington, to prove that André could not be considered as a spy, are, first, that he had with him, when he was taken, a protection of Arnold, who was at that time acting under a commission of the Congress, and, therefore, competent to give protections. Certainly he was, to all strangers to his negotiations with Clinton, but not to André, who knew him to be at that time a traitor to the Congress—nay, more, whose protection was granted for no other purpose but to promote and give effect to his treachery. In the second place, they say that at the time he was taken he was upon neutral ground; but they do not deny that he had been within the American lines in disguise. The letters written by André himself, show a firm, cool intrepidity, worthy a more glorious end. * * * * * *

"The fate of this unfortunate young man, and the manly style of his letters, have raised more compassion here than the loss of thousands in battle, and have ex-

Colonel John Laurens, former aide-de-camp to Washington, in speaking of André's fate, observed, "Arnold must undergo a punishment comparatively more severe, in the permanent, increasing torment of a mental hell." Washington doubted it. "He wants feeling," said he. "From some traits of his character which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse." And in a letter to Governor Reed, Washington writes, "Arnold's conduct is so villanously perfidious, that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence which has so often and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid intention to surrender the post and garrison of West Point into the hands of the enemy. * * * * * The confidence and folly which have marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villainy, and all three are perfect in their kind."

Mrs. Arnold, on arriving at her father's house in Philadelphia, had decided on a separation from her husband, to whom she could not endure the thoughts of returning after his dishonor. This course, however, was not allowed her. The executive council, wrongfully suspecting her of having aided in the correspond-

cited a warmer indignation against the Americans, than any former act of the Congress. When the passions of men are so deeply affected, you will not expect to find them keep within the bounds of reason. Panegyrics of the gallant André are unbounded; they call him the English Mutius, and talk of erecting monuments to his memory. Certainly, no man in his situation could have behaved with more determined courage; but his situation was by no means such as to admit of these exaggerated praises."

ence between her husband and André, knowing its treasonable tendency, ordered her to leave the State within fourteen days, and not to return during the continuance of the war. "We tried every means," writes one of her connections, "to prevail on the council to permit her to stay among us, and not to compel her to go to that infernal villain, her husband.* Mr. Shippen (her father) had promised the council, and Mrs. Arnold had signed a writing to the same purpose, engaging not to write to General Arnold any letters whatever, and to receive no letters without showing them to the council, if she was permitted to stay." It was all in vain, and, strongly against her will, she rejoined her husband in New York. His fear for her personal safety from the fury of the people proved groundless. That scrupulous respect for the female sex, so prevalent throughout the United States, was her safeguard. While the whole country resounded with execrations of her husband's guilt; while his effigy was dragged through the streets of town and village, burnt at the stake, or swung on the gibbet, she passed on secure from injury or insult. The execrations of the populace were silenced at her approach. Arriving at nightfall at a village where they were preparing for one of these burnings in effigy, the pyre remained unkindled, the people dispersed quietly to their homes, and the wife of the traitor was suffered to sleep in peace.

She returned home but once, about five years after her exile, and was treated with such coldness and neglect that she declared she never could come again. In England her charms and virtues, it is said, procured her sympathy and friendship, and helped to sustain the social position of her husband, who, however, was

* Letters and Papers relating to the Provincial Hist. of Pennsylvania, p. lxiv.

"generally slighted, and sometimes insulted." * She died in London, in the winter of 1796. In recent years it has been maintained that Mrs. Arnold was actually cognizant and participant of her husband's crime; but, after carefully examining all the proofs adduced, we remain of opinion that she was innocent.

We have been induced to enter thus largely into the circumstances of this story, from the undiminished interest taken in it by the readers of American history. Indeed, a romance has been thrown around the memory of the unfortunate André, which increases with the progress of years; while the name of Arnold will stand sadly conspicuous to the end of time, as the only American officer of note, throughout all the trials and vicissitudes of the Revolution, who proved traitor to the glorious cause of his country.

NOTE.

The following fragment of a letter from Arnold's mother to him in early life, was recently put into our hands. Well would it have been for him had he adhered to its pious, though humble counsels.

Norwich April 12 1754.

"dear childe. I received yours of 1 instant and was glad to hear that you was well: pray my dear let your first consern be to make your pease with god as itt is of all conserns of ye greatest importence. Keep a stedy watch over your thoughts, words and actions. be dutifull to superiors obliging to equalls and affibel to inferiors. * * * * *

from your afectionate
Hannah Arnold.

P. S. I have sent you fifty shillings youse itt prudently as you are acountabell to God and your father. Your father and aunt joyns with me in love and servis to Mr Cogswell and ladey and yourself Your sister is from home.

To Mr
benedict arnold
at
canterbury

your father put
twenty more

* Letters and Papers of Prov. Hist. Pennsylvania, lxvi.

CHAPTER XII.

GREENE TAKES COMMAND AT WEST POINT—INSIDIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SHAKE THE CONFIDENCE OF WASHINGTON IN HIS OFFICERS—PLAN TO ENTRAP ARNOLD—CHARACTER OF SERGEANT CHAMPE—COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF GATES—GREENE APPOINTED TO THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT—WASHINGTON'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HIM—INCURSIONS FROM CANADA—MOHAWK VALLEY RAVAGED—STATE OF THE ARMY—REFORMS ADOPTED—ENLISTMENT FOR THE WAR—HALF PAY.

As the enemy would now possess the means, through Arnold, of informing themselves thoroughly about West Point, Washington hastened to have the works completed and strongly garrisoned. Major-general Greene was ordered to march with the Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, and Stark's brigades, and take temporary command (ultimately to be transferred to General Heath), and the Pennsylvania troops, which had been thrown into the fortress at the time of Arnold's desertion, were relieved. Washington himself took post with his main army, at Prakeness, near Passaic Falls in New Jersey.

Insidious attempts had been made by anonymous papers, and other means, as we have already hinted, to shake the confidence of the commander-in-chief in his officers, and especially to implicate General St. Clair in the late conspiracy. Washington was exceedingly disturbed in mind for a time, and engaged Major Henry Lee, who was stationed with his dragoons on the lines, to

probe the matter through secret agents in New York. The result proved the utter falsehood of these insinuations.

At the time of making this inquiry, a plan was formed at Washington's suggestion to get possession of the person of Arnold. The agent pitched upon by Lee for the purpose, was the sergeant-major of cavalry in his legion, John Champe by name, a young Virginian about twenty-four years of age, whom he describes as being rather above the middle size—full of bone and muscle; with a saturnine countenance, grave, thoughtful, and taciturn, of tried loyalty and inflexible courage. By many promises and much persuasion, Lee brought him to engage in the attempt. "I have incited his thirst for fame," writes he, "by impressing on his mind the virtue and glory of the act."

Champe was to make a pretended desertion to the enemy at New York. There he was to enlist in a corps which Arnold was raising, insinuate himself into some menial or military situation about his person, and, watching for a favorable moment, was, with the aid of a confederate from Newark, to seize him in the night, gag him, and bring him across the Hudson into Bergen woods, in the Jerseys.

Washington, in approving the plan, enjoined and stipulated that Arnold should be brought to him alive. "No circumstance whatever," said he, "shall obtain my consent to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event, would be, that ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him, and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off."

The pretended desertion of the sergeant took place on the night of October 20th, and was attended with difficulties. He had to evade patrols of horse and foot, beside stationary guards

and irregular scouting parties. Major Lee could render him no assistance other than to delay pursuit, should his departure be discovered. About eleven o'clock the sergeant took his cloak, valise, and orderly book, drew his horse from the picket, and mounting, set out on his hazardous course, while the major retired to rest.

He had not been in bed half an hour, when Captain Carnes, officer of the day, hurrying into his quarters, gave word that one of the patrols had fallen in with a dragoon, who, on being challenged, put spurs to his horse, and escaped. Lee pretended to be annoyed by the intrusion, and to believe that the pretended dragoon was some countryman of the neighborhood. The captain was piqued; made a muster of the dragoons, and returned with word that the sergeant-major was missing, who had gone off with horse, baggage, arms, and orderly book.

Lee was now compelled to order out a party in pursuit under Cornet Middleton, but in so doing, he contrived so many delays, that, by the time they were in the saddle, Champe had an hour's start. His pursuers, too, were obliged in the course of the night, to halt occasionally, dismount and examine the road, to guide themselves by the horse's tracks. At daybreak they pressed forward more rapidly, and from the summit of a hill descried Champe, not more than half a mile in front. The sergeant at the same moment caught sight of his pursuers, and now the chase became desperate. Champe had originally intended to make for Paulus Hook, but changed his course, threw his pursuers at fault, and succeeded in getting abreast of two British galleys at anchor near the shore beyond Bergen. He had no time to lose. Cornet Middleton was but two or three hundred yards behind him. Throwing himself off his horse, and running through a marsh, he

plunged into the river, and called to the galleys for help. A boat was sent to his assistance, and he was conveyed on board of one of those vessels.

For a time the whole plan promised to be successful. Champe enlisted in Arnold's corps; was employed about his person; and every arrangement was made to surprise him at night in a garden in the rear of his quarters, convey him to a boat, and ferry him across the Hudson. On the appointed night, Lee, with three dragoons and three led horses, was in the woods of Hoboken, on the Jersey shore, waiting to receive the captive. Hour after hour passed away,—no boat approached,—day broke; and the major, with his dragoons and his led horses, returned perplexed and disappointed to the camp.

Washington was extremely chagrined at the issue of the undertaking, fearing that the sergeant had been detected in the last scene of his perilous and difficult enterprise. It subsequently proved, that on the day preceding the night fixed on for the capture, Arnold had removed his quarters to another part of the town, to superintend the embarkation of troops, preparing (as was rumored) for an expedition to be directed by himself, and that the American legion, consisting chiefly of American deserters, had been transferred from their barracks to one of the transports. Among the troops thus transferred was John Champe; nor was he able for a long time to effect his escape, and resume his real character of a loyal and patriotic soldier. He was rewarded when he did so, by the munificence of the commander-in-chief, and the admiration of his old comrades in arms; having so nobly braved, in his country's cause, not merely danger, but a long course of obloquy.

We have here to note the altered fortunes of the once pros-

perous General Gates. His late defeat at Camden had withered the laurels snatched at Saratoga. As in the one instance he had received exaggerated praise, so in the other, he suffered undue censure. The sudden annihilation of an army from which so much had been expected, and the retreat of the general before the field was absolutely lost, appeared to demand a strict investigation. Congress therefore passed a resolution (October 5th), requiring Washington to order a court of inquiry into the conduct of Gates as commander of the Southern army, and to appoint some other officer to the command until the inquiry should be made. Washington at once selected Greene for the important trust, the well-tried officer whom he would originally have chosen, had his opinion been consulted, when Congress so unadvisedly gave the command to Gates. In the present instance his choice was in concurrence with the expressed wishes of the delegates of the three Southern States, conveyed to him by one of their number.

Washington's letter of instructions to Greene (October 22d) showed the implicit confidence he reposed in the abilities and integrity of that excellent officer. "Uninformed as I am," writes he, "of the enemy's force in that quarter, of our own, or of the resources which it will be in our power to command, for carrying on the war, I can give you no particular instructions, but must leave you to govern yourself entirely according to your own prudence and judgment, and the circumstances in which you find yourself. I am aware that the nature of the command will offer you embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature, but I rely upon your abilities and exertions for every thing your means will enable you to effect."

With regard to the court of inquiry, it was to be conducted in

the quarter in which Gates had acted, where all the witnesses were, and where alone the requisite information could be obtained. Baron Steuben, who was to accompany Greene to the South, was to preside, and the members of the court were to be such general and field-officers of the Continental troops as were not present at the battle of Camden, or, having been present, were not wanted as witnesses, or were persons to whom General Gates had no objection. The affair was to be conducted with the greatest impartiality, and with as much despatch as circumstances would permit.

Washington concludes his letter of instructions to Greene, with expressions dictated by friendship as well as official duty. "You will keep me constantly advised of the state of your affairs, and of every material occurrence. My warmest wishes for your success, reputation, health and happiness accompany you."

Ravaging incursions from Canada had harassed the northern parts of the State of New York of late, and laid desolate some parts of the country from which Washington had hoped to receive great supplies of flour for the armies. Major Carleton, a nephew of Sir Guy, at the head of a motley force, European, Tory, and Indian, had captured Forts Anne and George. Sir John Johnson also, with Joseph Brant, and a mongrel half-savage crew, had laid waste the fertile region of the Mohawk River, and burned the villages of Schoharie and Caughnawaga. The greatest alarm prevailed throughout the neighboring country. Governor Clinton himself took the field at the head of the militia, but before he arrived at the scene of mischief, the marauders had been encountered and driven back by General Van Rensselaer and the militia of those parts; not, however, until they had nearly destroyed the

settlements on the Mohawk. Washington now put Brigadier-general James Clinton (the governor's brother) in command of the Northern department.

The state of the army was growing more and more a subject of solicitude to the commander-in-chief. He felt weary of struggling on, with such scanty means, and such vast responsibility. The campaign, which, at its commencement, had seemed pregnant with favorable events, had proved sterile and inactive, and was drawing to a close. The short terms for which most of the troops were enlisted must soon expire, and then the present army would be reduced to a mere shadow. The saddened state of his mind may be judged from his letters. An ample one addressed to General Sullivan, fully lays open his feelings and his difficulties. "I had hoped," writes he, "but hoped in vain, that a prospect was displaying which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favorable disposition of Spain; the promised succor from France; the combined force in the West Indies; the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other governments of Europe), and humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain); the superiority of France and Spain by sea in Europe; the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed, in the aggregate, an opinion in my breast, which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams, that the hour of deliverance was not far distant; since, however unwilling Great Britain might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But, alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress.

"We have been half of our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form

them; and in a little time we shall have no men, if we have no money to pay them. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great Revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is in my opinion absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it was necessary, it could be proved to any person of a moderate understanding, that an annual army, raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is, in various ways which could be enumerated, ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men under good organization and military discipline, which never was nor ever will be the case with new troops. A thousand arguments resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove that the army, if it is dependent upon State supplies, must disband or starve, and that taxation alone, especially at this late hour, cannot furnish the means to carry on the war." *

We will here add, that the repeated and elaborate reasonings of Washington, backed by dear-bought experience, slowly brought Congress to adopt a system suggested by him for the organization and support of the army, according to which, troops were to be enlisted to serve throughout the war, and all officers who continued in service until the return of peace were to receive half pay during life.

* Writings of Washington, vii., 228.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARQUIS LAFAYETTE AND HIS LIGHT-INFANTRY—PROPOSES A BRILLIANT STROKE—PREPARATIONS FOR AN ATTACK ON THE BRITISH POSTS ON NEW YORK ISLAND—VISIT OF THE MARQUIS OF CHASTELLUX TO THE AMERICAN CAMP—WASHINGTON AT HEAD-QUARTERS—ATTACK ON THE BRITISH POSTS GIVEN UP—STARK FORAGES WESTCHESTER COUNTY—EXPLOIT OF TALLMADGE ON LONG ISLAND.

The Marquis Lafayette at this time commanded the advance guard of Washington's army, composed of six battalions of light infantry. They were better clad than the other soldiery; in trim uniforms, leathern helmets, with crests of horse-hair. The officers were armed with spontoons, the non-commissioned officers with fusees; both with short sabres which the marquis had brought from France, and presented to them. He was proud of his troops, and had a young man's ardor for active service. The inactivity which had prevailed for some time past was intolerable to him. To satisfy his impatient longings, Washington had permitted him in the beginning of October to attempt a descent at night on Staten Island, to surprise two Hessian encampments. It had fallen through for want of boats, and other requisites, but he saw enough, he said, to convince him that the Americans were altogether fitted for such enterprises.*

* Memoires de Lafayette, T. 1. p. 337.

The marquis saw with repining the campaign drawing to a close, and nothing done that would rouse the people in America, and be spoken of at the Court of Versailles. He was urgent with Washington that the campaign should be terminated by some brilliant stroke. "Any enterprise," writes he, "will please the people of this country, and show them that we do not mean to remain idle when we have men; even a defeat, provided it were not disastrous, would have its good effect."

Complaints, he hinted, had been made in France of the prevailing inactivity. "If any thing could decide the ministry to yield us the succor demanded," writes he, "it would be our giving the nation a proof that we are ready."

The brilliant stroke, suggested with some detail by the marquis, was a general attack upon Fort Washington, and the other posts at the north end of the island of New York, and, under certain circumstaces, which he specified, *make a push for the city.*

Washington regarded the project of his young and ardent friend with a more sober and cautious eye. "It is impossible, my dear marquis," replies he, "to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things, which for want of success may make them worse. We are to lament that there has been a misapprehension of our circumstances in Europe; but to endeavor to recover our reputation, we should take care that we do not injure it more. Ever since it became evident that the allied arms could not co-operate this campaign, I have had an eye to the point you mention, determined, if a favorable opening should offer, to embrace it: but, so far as my information goes, the enterprise would not be warranted. It would, in my opinion, be im-

prudent to throw an army of ten thousand men upon an island, against nine thousand, exclusive of seamen and militia. This, from the accounts we have, appears to be the enemy's force. All we can do at present, therefore, is to endeavor to gain a more certain knowledge of their situation, and act accordingly."

The British posts in question were accordingly reconnoitred from the opposite banks of the Hudson, by Colonel Gouvion, an able French engineer. Preparations were made to carry the scheme into effect, should it be determined upon, in which case Lafayette was to lead the attack at the head of his light troops, and be supported by Washington with his main force; while a strong foraging party sent by General Heath from West Point to White Plains in Westchester county, to draw the attention of the enemy in that direction, and mask the real design, was, on preconcerted signals, to advance rapidly to King's Bridge, and cooperate.

Washington's own officers were kept in ignorance of the ultimate object of the preparatory movements. "Never," writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, "never was a plan better arranged, and never did circumstances promise more sure or complete success. The British were not only unalarmed, but our own troops were misguided in their operations." As the plan was not carried into effect, we have forborne to give many of its details.

At this juncture, the Marquis de Chastellux arrived in camp. He was on a tour of curiosity, while the French troops at Rhode Island were in winter-quarters, and came on the invitation of his relative, the Marquis Lafayette, who was to present him to Washington. In after years he published an account of his tour, in which we have graphic sketches of the camp and the command-

ers. He arrived with his aides-de-camp on the afternoon of November 23d, and sought the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief. They were in a large farm-house. There was a spacious tent in the yard before it for the general, and several smaller tents in an adjacent field for his guards. Baggage waggons were arranged about for the transportation of the general's effects, and a number of grooms were attending to very fine horses belonging to general officers and their aides-de-camp. Every thing was in perfect order. As De Chastellux rode up, he observed Lafayette in front of the house, conversing with an officer, tall of stature, with a mild and noble countenance. It was Washington. De Chastellux alighted and was presented by Lafayette. His reception was frank and cordial. Washington conducted him into the house. Dinner was over, but Generals Knox, Wayne, and Howe, and Colonels Hamilton, Tilghman, and other officers, were still seated round the board. Washington introduced De Chastellux to them, and ordered a repast for the former and his aides-de-camp: all remained at table, and a few glasses of claret and Madeira promoted sociability. The marquis soon found himself at his ease with Washington. "The goodness and benevolence which characterize him," observes he, "are felt by all around him; but the confidence he inspires is never familiar; it springs from a profound esteem for his virtues, and a great opinion of his talents."

In the evening, after the guests had retired, Washington conducted the marquis to a chamber prepared for him and his aides-de-camp, apologizing with nobly frank and simple politeness, that his scanty quarters did not afford more spacious accommodation.

The next morning, horses were led up after breakfast; they were to review the troops and visit Lafayette's encampment seven

miles distant. The horses which De Chastellux and Washington rode, had been presented to the latter by the State of Virginia. There were fine blood horses also for the aides-de-camp. "Washington's horses," writes De Chastellux, "are as good as they are beautiful, and all perfectly trained. He trains them all himself. He is a very good and a very hardy cavalier, leaping the highest barriers, and riding very fast, without rising in the stirrups, bearing on the bridle, or suffering his horse to run as if wild."

In the camp of artillery where General Knox received them, the marquis found every thing in perfect order, and conducted in the European style. Washington apologized for no salute being fired. Detachments were in movement at a distance, in the plan of operations, and the booming of guns might give an alarm, or be mistaken for signals.

Incessant and increasing rain obliged Washington to make but a short visit to Lafayette's camp, whence, putting spurs to his horse, he conducted his French visitors back to head-quarters on as fast a gallop as bad roads would permit.

There were twenty guests at table that day at head-quarters. The dinner was in the English style, large dishes of butcher's meat and poultry, with different kinds of vegetables, followed by pies and puddings and a dessert of apples and hickory nuts. Washington's fondness for the latter was noticed by the marquis, and indeed was often a subject of remark. He would sit picking them by the hour after dinner, as he sipped his wine and conversed.

One of the general's aides-de-camp sat by him at the end of the table, according to custom, to carve the dishes and circulate the wine. Healths were drunk and toasts were given; the latter were sometimes given by the general through his aide-de-camp.

The conversation was tranquil and pleasant. Washington willingly entered into some details about the principal operations of the war, "but always," says the marquis, "with a modesty and conciseness, which proved sufficiently that it was out of pure complaisance that he consented to talk about himself."

Wayne was pronounced agreeable and animated in conversation, and possessed of wit; but Knox, with his genial aspect and cordial manners, seems to have won De Chastellux's heart. "He is thirty-five years of age," writes he, "very stout but very active; a man of talent and intelligence, amiable, gay, sincere and loyal. It is impossible to know him without esteeming him, and to see him without loving him."

It was about half-past seven when the company rose from the table, shortly after which, those who were not of the household departed. There was a light supper of three or four dishes, with fruit, and abundance of hickory nuts; the cloth was soon removed; Bordeaux and Madeira wine were placed upon the table, and conversation went on. Colonel Hamilton was the aide-de-camp who officiated, and announced the toasts as they occurred. "It is customary," writes the marquis, "towards the end of the supper to call upon each one for a *sentiment*, that is to say, the name of some lady to whom he is attached by some sentiment either of love, friendship, or simple preference."

It is evident there was extra gayety at the table of the commander-in-chief during this visit, in compliment to his French guests; but we are told, that gay conversation often prevailed at the dinners at head-quarters among the aides-de-camp and young officers, in which Washington took little part, though a quiet smile would show that he enjoyed it.

We have been tempted to quote freely the remarks of De

Chastellux, as they are those of a cultivated man of society, whose position and experience made him a competent judge, and who had an opportunity of observing Washington in a familiar point of view.

Speaking of his personal appearance, he writes: "His form is noble and elevated, well-shaped and exactly proportioned; his physiognomy mild and agreeable, but such, that one does not speak in particular of any one of his traits; and that in quitting him there remains simply the recollection of a fine countenance. His air is neither grave nor familiar; one sees sometimes on his forehead the marks of thought, but never of inquietude; while inspiring respect he inspires confidence, and his smile is always that of benevolence.

"Above all, it is interesting," continues the marquis, "to see him in the midst of the general officers of his army. General in a republic, he has not the imposing state of a marshal of France who gives the *order;* hero in a republic, he excites a different sort of respect, which seems to originate in this sole idea, that the welfare of each individual is attached to his person."

He sums up his character in these words: "Brave without temerity; laborious without ambition; generous without prodigality; noble without pride; virtuous without severity; he seems always to stop short of that limit, where the virtues, assuming colors more vivid, but more changeable and dubious, might be taken for defects."

During the time of this visit of the marquis to head-quarters, news was received of the unexpected and accidental appearance of several British armed vessels in the Hudson; the effect was to disconcert the complicated plan of a coup-de-main upon the British posts, and finally, to cause it to be abandoned.

Some parts of the scheme were attended with success. The veteran Stark, with a detachment of twenty-five hundred men, made an extensive forage in Westchester county, and Major Tallmadge with eighty men, chiefly dismounted dragoons of Sheldon's regiment, crossed in boats from the Connecticut shore to Long Island, where the Sound was twenty miles wide; traversed the island on the night of the 22d of November, surprised Fort George at Coram, captured the garrison of fifty-two men, demolished the fort, set fire to magazines of forage, and recrossed the Sound to Fairfield, without the loss of a man: an achievement which drew forth a high eulogium from Congress.

At the end of November the army went into winter-quarters; the Pennsylvania line in the neighborhood of Morristown, the Jersey line about Pompton, the New England troops at West Point, and the other posts of the Highlands; and the New York line was stationed at Albany, to guard against any invasion from Canada.

The French army remained stationed at Newport, excepting the Duke of Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon in Connecticut. Washington's head-quarters were established at New Windsor, on the Hudson.

We will now turn to the South to note the course of affairs in that quarter during the last few months.

CHAPTER XIV.

RIGOROUS MEASURES OF CORNWALLIS IN SOUTH CAROLINA—FERGUSON SENT TO SCOUR THE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY BETWEEN THE CATAWBA AND THE YADKIN—CORNWALLIS IN A HORNET'S NEST—MOVEMENTS OF FERGUSON—MOUNTAIN MEN AND FIERCE MEN FROM KENTUCKY—BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN—RETROGRADE MARCH OF CORNWALLIS.

Cornwallis having, as he supposed, entirely crushed the "rebel cause" in South Carolina, by the defeats of Gates and Sumter, remained for some time at Camden, detained by the excessive heat of the weather and the sickness of part of his troops, broken down by the hardships of campaigning under a southern sun. He awaited also supplies and reinforcements.

Immediately after the victory at Camden, he had ordered the friends to royalty in North Carolina "to arm and intercept the beaten army of General Gates," promising that he would march directly to the borders of that province in their support; he now detached Major Patrick Ferguson to its western confines, to keep the war alive in that quarter. This resolute partisan had with him his own corps of light infantry, and a body of royalist militia of his own training. His whole force was between eleven and twelve hundred men, noted for activity and alertness, and unincumbered with baggage or artillery.

His orders were to skirr the mountain country between the

Catawba and the Yadkin, harass the whigs, inspirit the tories, and embody the militia under the royal banner. This done, he was to repair to Charlotte, the capital of Mecklenburg County, where he would find Lord Cornwallis, who intended to make it his rendezvous. Should he, however, in the course of his tour, be threatened by a superior force, he was immediately to return to the main army. No great opposition, however, was apprehended, the Americans being considered totally broken up and dispirited.

During the suspense of his active operations in the field, Cornwallis instituted rigorous measures against Americans who continued under arms, or, by any other acts, manifested what he termed "a desperate perseverance in opposing His Majesty's Government." Among these were included many who had taken refuge in North Carolina. A commissioner was appointed to take possession of their estates and property; of the annual product of which a part was to be allowed for the support of their families, the residue to be applied to the maintenance of the war. Letters from several of the principal inhabitants of Charleston having been found in the baggage of the captured American generals, the former were accused of breaking their parole, and holding a treasonable correspondence with the armed enemies of England; they were in consequence confined on board of prison ships, and afterwards transported to St. Augustine in Florida.

Among the prisoners taken in the late combats, many, it was discovered, had British protections in their pockets; these were deemed arrant runagates, amenable to the penalties of the proclamation issued by Sir Henry Clinton on the 3d of June; they were therefore led forth from the provost and hanged, almost without the form of an inquiry.

These measures certainly were not in keeping with the char-

acter for moderation and benevolence usually given to Lord Cornwallis; but they accorded with the rancorous spirit manifested toward each other both by whigs and tories in Southern warfare. If they were intended by his lordship as measures of policy, their effect was far different from what he anticipated; opposition was exasperated into deadly hate, and a cry of vengeance was raised throughout the land. Cornwallis decamped from Camden, and set out for North Carolina. In the subjugation of that province, he counted on the co-operation of the troops which Sir Henry Clinton was to send to the lower part of Virginia, which, after reducing the Virginians to obedience, were to join his lordship's standard on the confines of North Carolina.

Advancing into the latter province, Cornwallis took post at Charlotte, where he had given rendezvous to Ferguson. Mecklenburg, of which this was the capital, was, as the reader may recollect, the "heady high-minded" county, where the first declaration of independence had been made, and his lordship from uncomfortable experience soon pronounced Charlotte "the Hornet's Nest of North Carolina."

The surrounding country was wild and rugged, covered with close and thick woods, and crossed in every direction by narrow roads. All attempts at foraging were worse than useless. The plantations were small and afforded scanty supplies. The inhabitants were stanch whigs, with the pugnacious spirit of the old Covenanters. Instead of remaining at home and receiving the king's money in exchange for their produce, they turned out with their rifles, stationed themselves in covert places, and fired upon the foraging parties; convoys of provisions from Camden had to fight their way, and expresses were shot down and their despatches seized.

The capture of his expresses was a sore annoyance to Cornwallis, depriving him of all intelligence concerning the movements of Colonel Ferguson, whose arrival he was anxiously awaiting. The expedition of that doughty partisan officer here calls for especial notice. He had been chosen for this military tour as being calculated to gain friends by his conciliating disposition and manners, and his address to the people of the country was in that spirit: "We come not to make war upon women and children, but to give them money and relieve their distresses." Ferguson, however, had a loyal hatred of whigs, and to his standard flocked many rancorous tories, besides outlaws and desperadoes, so that with all his conciliating intentions, his progress through the country was attended by many exasperating excesses.

He was on his way to join Cornwallis when a chance for a signal exploit presented itself. An American force under Colonel Elijah Clarke, of Georgia, was retreating to the mountain districts of North Carolina, after an unsuccessful attack upon the British post at Augusta. Ferguson resolved to cut off their retreat. Turning towards the mountains, he made his way through a rugged wilderness and took post at Gilbert-town, a small frontier village of log-houses. He was encouraged to this step, say the British chroniclers, by the persuasion that there was no force in that part of the country able to look him in the face. He had no idea that the marauds of his followers had arrayed the very wilderness against him. "All of a sudden," say the chroniclers just cited, "a numerous, fierce and unexpected enemy sprung up in the depths of the desert. The scattered inhabitants of the mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of

six hundred strong, daring, well-mounted and excellent horsemen." *

These, in fact, were the people of the mountains which form the frontiers of the Carolinas and Georgia, "mountain men," as they were commonly called, a hardy race, half huntsmen, half herdsmen, inhabiting deep narrow valleys, and fertile slopes, adapted to grazing, watered by the coldest of springs and brightest of streams, and embosomed in mighty forest trees. Being subject to inroads and surprisals from the Chickasaws, Cherokees and Creeks, a tacit league existed among them for mutual defence, and it only needed, as in the present instance, an alarm to be circulated through their settlements by swift messengers, to bring them at once to the point of danger. Beside these, there were other elements of war suddenly gathering in Ferguson's vicinity. A band of what were termed "the wild and fierce" inhabitants of Kentucky, with men from other settlements west of the Alleghanies, had crossed the mountains, led by Colonels Campbell and Boone, to pounce upon a quantity of Indian goods at Augusta; but had pulled up on hearing of the repulse of Clarke. The stout yeomen, also, of the district of Ninety-Six, roused by the marauds of Ferguson, had taken the field, under the conduct of Colonel James Williams, of Granville County. Here, too, were hard-riders and sharp-shooters, from Holston River, Powel's Valley, Botetourt, Fincastle, and other parts of Virginia, commanded by Colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby and Sevier. Such were the different bodies of mountaineers and backwoodsmen, suddenly drawing together from various parts to the number of three thousand.

* Annual Register, 1781, p. 52.

Threatened by a force so superior in numbers and fierce in hostility, Ferguson issued an address to rouse the tories. "The Backwater men have crossed the mountain," said he, "McDowell, Hampton, Shelby and Cleveland are at their head. If you choose to be trodden upon for ever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let women look out for real men to protect them. If you desire to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp."

The taunting appeal produced but little effect. In this exigency, Ferguson remembered the instructions of Cornwallis, that he should rejoin him should he find himself threatened by a superior force; breaking up his quarters, therefore, he pushed for the British army, sending messengers ahead to apprise his lordship of his danger. Unfortunately for him, his missives were intercepted.

Gilbert-town had not long been vacated by Ferguson and his troops, when the motley host we have described thronged in. Some were on foot, but the greater part on horseback. Some were in homespun garb; but the most part in hunting-shirts, occasionally decorated with colored fringe and tassels. Each man had his long rifle and hunting-knife, his wallet, or knapsack and blanket, and either a buck's tail or sprig of evergreen in his hat. Here and there an officer appeared in the Continental uniform of blue and buff, but most preferred the half-Indian hunting-dress. There was neither tent nor tent equipage, neither baggage nor baggage waggon to encumber the movements of that extemporaneous host. Prompt warriors of the wilderness, with them it was "seize the weapon—spring into the saddle—and away!" In going into action, it was their practice to dismount, tie their horses to the branches of trees, or secure them in some

other way, so as to be at hand for use when the battle was over, either to pursue a flying enemy, or make their own escape by dint of hoof.

There was a clamor of tongues for a time at Gilbert-town; groups on horseback and foot in every part, holding hasty council. Being told that Ferguson had retreated by the Cherokee road toward North Carolina, about nine hundred of the hardiest and best mounted set out in urgent pursuit; leaving those who were on foot, or weakly mounted, to follow on as fast as possible. Colonel William Campbell, of Virginia, having come from the greatest distance, was allowed to have command of the whole party; but there was not much order nor subordination. Each colonel led his own men in his own way.

In the evening they arrived at the Cowpens, a grazing neighborhood. Here two beeves were killed and given to be cut up, cooked and eaten as quick as possible. Before those who were slow or negligent had half prepared their repast, marching orders were given, and all were again in the saddle. A rapid and irregular march was kept up all night in murky darkness and through a heavy rain. About daybreak they crossed Broad River, where an attack was apprehended. Not finding the enemy, they halted, lit their fires, made their morning's meal, and took a brief repose. By nine o'clock they were again on the march. The rainy night had been succeeded by a bright October morning, and all were in high spirits. Ferguson, they learnt, had taken the road toward King's Mountain, about twelve miles distant. When within three miles of it their scouts brought in word that he had taken post on its summit. The officers now held a short consultation on horseback, and then proceeded. The position taken by Ferguson was a strong one. King's Mountain

rises out of a broken country, and is detached, on the north, from inferior heights by a deep valley, so as to resemble an insulated promontory about half a mile in length, with sloping sides, excepting on the north. The mountain was covered for the most part with lofty forest trees, free from underwood, interspersed with boulders and masses of gray rock. The forest was sufficiently open to give free passage to horsemen.

As the Americans drew nearer, they could occasionally, through openings of the woodland, descry the glittering of arms along a level ridge, forming the crest of King's Mountain. This, Ferguson had made his stronghold; boasting that "if all the rebels out of hell should attack him, they would not drive him from it."

Dismounting at a small stream which runs through a ravine, the Americans picketed their horses or tied them to the branches of the trees, and gave them in charge of a small guard. They then formed themselves into three divisions of nearly equal size, and prepared to storm the heights on three sides. Campbell, seconded by Shelby, was to lead the centre division; Sevier with McDowell the right, and Cleveland and Williams the left. The divisions were to scale the mountain as nearly as possible at the same time. The fighting directions were in frontier style. When once in action, every one must act for himself. The men were not to wait for the word of command, but to take good aim and fire as fast as possible. When they could no longer hold their ground, they were to get behind trees, or retreat a little, and return to the fight, but never to go quite off.

Campbell allowed time for the flanking divisions to move to the right and left along the base of the mountain, and take their proper distances; he then pushed up in front with the centre

division, he and Shelby, each at the head of his men. The first firing was about four o'clock, when a picket was driven in by Cleveland and Williams on the left, and pursued up the mountain. Campbell soon arrived within rifle distance of the crest of the mountain, whence a sheeted fire of musketry was opened upon him. He instantly deployed his men, posted them behind trees, and returned the fire with deadly effect.

Ferguson, exasperated at being thus hunted into this mountain fastness, had been chafing in his rocky lair and meditating a furious sally. He now rushed out with his regulars, made an impetuous charge with the bayonet, and dislodging his assailants from their coverts, began to drive them down the mountain, they not having a bayonet among them. He had not proceeded far, when a flanking fire was opened by one of the other divisions; facing about and attacking this he was again successful, when a third fire was opened from another quarter. Thus, as fast as one division gave way before the bayonet, another came to its relief; while those who had given way rallied and returned to the charge. The nature of the fighting ground was more favorable to the rifle than the bayonet, and this was a kind of warfare in which the frontier men were at home. The elevated position of the enemy also was in favor of the Americans, securing them from the danger of their own cross-fire. Ferguson found that he was completely in the hunter's toils, beset on every side; but he stood bravely at bay, until the ground around him was strewed with the killed and wounded, picked off by the fatal rifle. His men were at length broken, and retreated in confusion along the ridge. He galloped from place to place endeavoring to rally them, when a rifle ball brought him to the ground, and his white horse was seen careering down the mountain without a rider.

This closed the bloody fight; for Ferguson's second in command, seeing all further resistance hopeless, hoisted a white flag, beat a parley and sued for quarters. One hundred and fifty of the enemy had fallen, and as many been wounded; while of the Americans, but twenty were killed, though a considerable number were wounded. Among those slain was Colonel James Williams, who had commanded the troops of Ninety-Six, and proved himself one of the most daring of the partisan leaders.

Eight hundred and ten men were taken prisoners, one hundred of whom were regulars, the rest royalists. The rancor awakened by civil war was shown in the treatment of some of the prisoners. A court-martial was held the day after the battle, and a number of tory prisoners who had been bitter in their hostility to the American cause, and flagitious in their persecution of their countrymen, were hanged. This was to revenge the death of American prisoners hanged at Camden and elsewhere.

The army of mountaineers and frontier men, thus fortuitously congregated, did not attempt to follow up their signal blow. They had no general scheme, no plan of campaign; it was the spontaneous rising of the sons of the soil, to revenge it on its invaders, and, having effected their purpose, they returned in triumph to their homes. They were little aware of the importance of their achievement. The battle of King's Mountain, inconsiderable as it was in the numbers engaged, turned the tide of Southern warfare. The destruction of Ferguson and his corps gave a complete check to the expedition of Cornwallis. He began to fear for the safety of South Carolina, liable to such sudden irruptions from the mountains; lest, while he was facing to the north, these hordes of stark-riding warriors might throw themselves behind him, and produce a popular combustion in the pro-

vince he had left. He resolved, therefore, to return with all speed to that province and provide for its security.

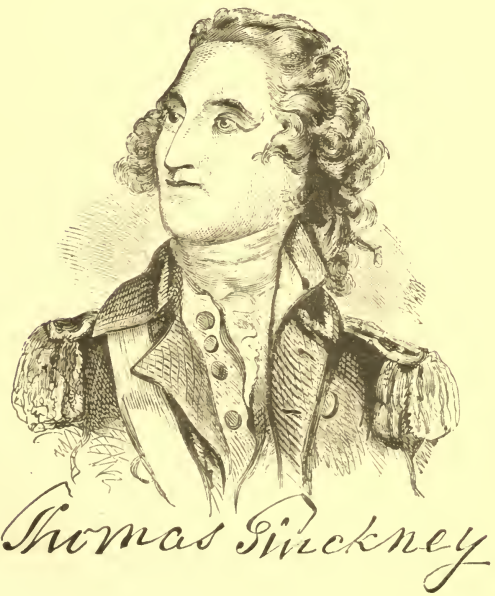
On the 14th of October he commenced his retrograde and mortifying march, conducting it in the night, and with such hurry and confusion, that nearly twenty waggons, laden with baggage and supplies, were lost. As he proceeded, the rainy season set in; the brooks and rivers became swollen, and almost impassable; the roads deep and miry; provisions and forage scanty; the troops generally sickly, having no tents. Lord Cornwallis himself was seized with a bilious fever, which obliged him to halt two days in the Catawba settlement, and afterwards to be conveyed in a waggon, giving up the command to Lord Rawdon.

In the course of this desolate march, the British suffered as usual from the vengeance of an outraged country, being fired upon from behind trees and other coverts by the yeomanry; their sentries shot down at their encampments; their foraging parties cut off. "The enemy," writes Lord Rawdon, "are mostly mounted militia, not to be overtaken by our infantry, nor to be safely pursued in this strong country by our cavalry."

For two weeks were they toiling on this retrograde march, through deep roads, and a country cut up by water-courses, with the very elements arrayed against them. At length, after fording the Catawba where it was six hundred yards wide, and three and a half deep, and where a handful of riflemen might have held them in check, the army arrived at Winnsborough, in South Carolina. Hence, by order of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon wrote on the 24th of October to Brigadier-general Leslie, who was at that time in the Chesapeake, with the force detached by Sir Henry Clinton for a descent upon Virginia, suggesting the expediency of his advancing to North Carolina, for the purpose of co-

operation with Cornwallis, who feared to proceed far from South Carolina, lest it should be again in insurrection.

In the mean time his lordship took post at Winnsborough. It was a central position, where he might cover the country from partisan incursions, obtain forage and supplies, and await the co-operation of General Leslie.



CHAPTER XV.

MARION—HIS CHARACTER—BYE NAMES—HAUNTS—TARLETON IN QUEST OF HIM—SUMTER ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE SANTEE—HIS AFFAIR WITH TARLETON AT BLACK STOCK HILL—GATES AT HILLSBOROUGH—HIS DOMESTIC MISFORTUNES—ARRIVAL OF GREENE—HIS CONSIDERATE CONDUCT—GATES RETIRES TO HIS ESTATE—CONDITION OF THE ARMY—STRATAGEM OF COLONEL WASHINGTON AT CLERMONT—MORGAN DETACHED TO THE DISTRICT OF NINETY-SIX—GREENE POSTS HIMSELF ON THE PEDEE.

The victory at King's Mountain had set the partisan spirit throughout the country in a blaze. Francis Marion was soon in the field. He had been made a brigadier-general by Governor Rutledge, but his brigade, as it was called, was formed of neighbors and friends, and was continually fluctuating in numbers. He was nearly fifty years of age, and small of stature, but hardy, healthy and vigorous. Brave but not braggart, never avoiding danger, but never rashly seeking it. Taciturn and abstemious; a strict disciplinarian: careful of the lives of his men, but little mindful of his own life. Just in his dealings, free from every thing selfish or mercenary, and incapable of a meanness. He had his haunts and strongholds in the morasses of the Pedee and Black River. His men were hardy and abstemious as himself; they ate their meat without salt, often subsisted on potatoes, were scantily clad, and almost destitute of blankets. Marion was full

of stratagems and expedients. Sallying forth from his morasses, he would overrun the lower districts, pass the Santee, beat up the small posts in the vicinity of Charleston, cut up the communication between that city and Camden; and having struck some signal blow, so as to rouse the vengeance of the enemy, would retreat again into his fenny fastnesses. Hence the British gave him the bye name of the *Swamp Fox*, but those of his countrymen who knew his courage, his loftiness of spirit and spotless integrity, considered him the *Bayard of the South.*

Tarleton, who was on duty in that part of the country, undertook, as he said, to draw the swamp fox from his cover. He accordingly marched cautiously down the east bank of the Wateree with a body of dragoons and infantry, in compact order. The fox, however, kept close; he saw that the enemy was too strong for him. Tarleton now changed his plan. By day he broke up his force into small detachments or patrols, giving them orders to keep near enough to each other to render mutual support if attacked, and to gather together at night.

The artifice had its effect. Marion sallied forth from his covert just before daybreak to make an attack upon one of these detachments, when, to his surprise, he found himself close upon the British camp. Perceiving the snare that had been spread for him, he made a rapid retreat. A close pursuit took place. For seven hours Marion was hunted from one swamp and fastness to another; several stragglers of his band were captured, and Tarleton was in strong hope of bringing him into action, when an express came spurring from Cornwallis, calling for the immediate services of himself and his dragoons in another quarter.

Sumter was again in the field! That indefatigable partisan having recruited a strong party in the mountainous country, to

which he retreated after his defeat on the Waterce, had reappeared on the west side of the Santee, repulsed a British party sent against him, killing its leader; then, crossing Broad River, had effected a junction with Colonels Clark and Brannan, and now menaced the British posts in the district of Ninety-Six.

It was to disperse this head of partisan war that Tarleton was called off from beleaguering Marion. Advancing with his accustomed celerity, he thought to surprise Sumter on the Enoree River. A deserter apprised the latter of his danger. He pushed across the river, but was hotly pursued, and his rear-guard roughly handled. He now made for the Tyger River, noted for turbulence and rapidity; once beyond this, he might disband his followers in the woods. Tarleton, to prevent his passing it unmolested, spurred forward in advance of his main body with one hundred and seventy dragoons and eighty mounted men of the infantry. Before five o'clock (Nov. 20) his advanced guard overtook and charged the rear of the Americans, who retreated to the main body. Sumter finding it impossible to cross Tyger River in safety, and being informed that the enemy, thus pressing upon him, were without infantry or cannon, took post on Black Stock Hill, with a rivulet and rail fence in front, the Tyger River in the rear and on the right flank, and a large log barn on the left. The barn was turned into a fortress, and a part of the force stationed in it to fire through the apertures between the logs.

Tarleton halted on an opposite height to await the arrival of his infantry, and part of his men dismounted to ease their horses. Sumter seized this moment for an attack. He was driven back after some sharp fighting. The enemy pursued, but were severely galled by the fire from the log barn. Enraged at seeing his men shot down, Tarleton charged with his cavalry, but found it im-

possible to dislodge the Americans from their rustic fortress. At the approach of night he fell back to join his infantry, leaving the ground strewed with his killed and wounded. The latter were treated with great humanity by Sumter. The loss of the Americans was only three killed and four wounded.

Sumter, who had received a severe wound in the breast, remained several hours on the field of action; but, understanding the enemy would be powerfully reinforced in the morning, he crossed the Tyger River in the night. He was then placed on a litter between two horses, and thus conducted across the country by a few faithful adherents. The rest of his little army dispersed themselves through the woods. Tarleton, finding his enemy had disappeared, claimed the credit of a victory; but those who considered the affair rightly, declared that he had received a severe check.

While the attention of the enemy was thus engaged by the enterprises of Sumter and Marion and their swamp warriors, General Gates was gathering together the scattered fragments of his army at Hillsborough. When all were collected, his whole force, exclusive of militia, did not exceed fourteen hundred men. It was, as he said, "rather a shadow than a substance." His troops, disheartened by defeat, were in a forlorn state, without clothing, without pay, and sometimes without provisions. Destitute of tents, they constructed hovels of fence-rails, poles, brushwood, and the stalks of Indian corn, the officers faring no better than the men.

The vanity of Gates was completely cut down by his late reverses. He had lost, too, the confidence of his officers, and was unable to maintain discipline among his men; who through their irregularities became a terror to the country people.

On the retreat of Cornwallis from Charlotte, Gates advanced to that place to make it his winter-quarters. Huts were ordered to be built, and a regular encampment was commenced. Smallwood, with a body of militia, was stationed below on the Catawba to guard the road leading through Camden; and further down was posted Brigadier-general Morgan, with a corps of light troops.

To add to his depression of spirits, Gates received the melancholy intelligence of the death of an only son, and, while he was yet writhing under the blow, came official despatches informing him of his being superseded in command. A letter from Washington, we are told, accompanied them, sympathizing with him in his domestic misfortunes, adverting with peculiar delicacy to his reverses in battle, assuring him of his undiminished confidence in his zeal and capacity, and his readiness to give him the command of the left wing of his army as soon as he could make it convenient to join him.

The effect of this letter was overpowering. Gates was found walking about his room in the greatest agitation, pressing the letter to his lips, breaking forth into ejaculations of gratitude and admiration, and when he could find utterance to his thoughts, declared that its tender sympathy and considerate delicacy had conveyed more consolation and delight to his heart than he had believed it possible ever to have felt again.*

General Greene arrived at Charlotte, on the 2d of December. On his way from the North he had made arrangements for supplies from the different States; and had left the Baron Steuben

* Related by Dr. Wm. Reed, at that time superintendent of the Hospital department at Hillsborough, to Alex. Garden, aide-de-camp to Greene.—*Garden's Anecdotes*, p. 350.

in Virginia to defend that State and procure and send on reinforcements and stores for the Southern army. On the day following his arrival, Greene took formal command. The delicacy with which he conducted himself towards his unfortunate predecessor is said to have been "edifying to the army." Consulting with his officers as to the court of inquiry on the conduct of General Gates, ordered by Congress; it was determined that there was not a sufficient number of general officers in camp to sit upon it; that the state of General Gates's feelings, in consequence of the death of his son, disqualified him from entering upon the task of his defence; and that it would be indelicate in the extreme to press on him an investigation, which his honor would not permit him to defer. Beside, added Greene, his is a case of misfortune, and the most honorable course to be pursued, both with regard to General Gates and the government, is to make such representations as may obtain a revision of the order of Congress directing an inquiry into his conduct. In this opinion all present concurred.

Gates, in fact, when informed in the most delicate manner of the order of Congress, was urgent that a court of inquiry should be immediately convened: he acknowledged there was some important evidence that could not at present be procured; but he relied on the honor and justice of the court to make allowance for the deficiency. He was ultimately brought to acquiesce in the decision of the council of war for the postponement, but declared that he could not think of serving until the matter should have been properly investigated. He determined to pass the interim on his estate in Virginia. Greene, in a letter to Washington (December 7th), writes: "General Gates sets out to-morrow for the northward. Many officers think very favorably of his con-

duct, and that, whenever an inquiry takes place, he will honorably acquit himself."

The kind and considerate conduct of Greene on the present occasion, completely subdued the heart of Gates. The coldness, if not ill-will, with which he had hitherto regarded him, was at an end, and, in all his subsequent correspondence with him, he addressed him in terms of affection.

We take pleasure in noting the generous conduct of the General Assembly of Virginia towards Gates. It was in session when he arrived at Richmond. "Those fathers of the commonwealth," writes Col. H. Lee, in his Memoirs, "appointed a committee of their body to wait on the vanquished general, and assure him of their high regard and esteem, that their remembrance of his former glorious services was never to be obliterated by any reverse of fortune; but, ever mindful of his great merit, they would omit no opportunity of testifying to the world the gratitude which Virginia, as a member of the American Union, owed to him in his military character."

Gates was sensibly affected and comforted by this kind reception, and retired with a lightened heart to his farm in Berkeley County.

The whole force at Charlotte, when Greene took command, did not much exceed twenty-three hundred men, and more than half of them were militia. It had been broken in spirit by the recent defeat. The officers had fallen into habits of negligence; the soldiers were loose and disorderly, without tents and camp equipage; badly clothed and fed, and prone to relieve their necessities by depredating upon the inhabitants. Greene's letters written at the time, abound with military aphorisms suggested by the squalid scene around him. "There must be either pride

or principle," said he, "to make a soldier. No man will think himself bound to fight the battles of a State that leaves him perishing for want of covering; nor can you inspire a soldier with the sentiment of pride, while his situation renders him an object of pity, rather than of envy. Good feeding is the first principle of good service. It is impossible to preserve discipline where troops are in want of every thing—to attempt severity will only thin the ranks by a more hasty desertion."

The state of the country in which he was to act was equally discouraging. "It is so extensive," said he, "and the powers of government so weak, that every body does as he pleases. The inhabitants are much divided in their political sentiments, and the whigs and tories pursue each other with little less than savage fury. The back country people are bold and daring; but the people upon the sea shore are sickly, and but indifferent militia."

"War here," observes he in another letter, "is upon a very different scale to what it is at the Northward. It is a plain business there. The geography of the country reduces its operations to two or three points. But here it is every where; and the country is so full of deep rivers and impassable creeks and swamps, that you are always liable to misfortunes of a capital nature. The whigs and tories," adds he, "are continually out in small parties, and all the middle country is so disaffected that you cannot lay in the most trifling magazine, or send a waggon through the country with the least article of stores without a guard."

A recent exploit had given some animation to the troops. Lieutenant-colonel Washington, detached with a troop of light-horse to check a foraging party of the enemy, scoured the coun-

try within thirteen miles of Camden. Here he found a body of loyalist militia strongly posted at Clermont, the seat of Colonel Rugeley, their tory commander. They had ensconced themselves in a large barn, built of logs, and had fortified it by a slight intrenchment and a line of abatis. To attack it with cavalry was useless. Colonel Washington dismounted part of his troops to appear like infantry; placed on two waggon-wheels the trunk of a pine-tree, shaped and painted to look like a field-piece, brought it to bear upon the enemy, and, displaying his cavalry, sent in a flag summoning the garrison to surrender instantly, on pain of having their log castle battered about their ears. The garrison, to the number of one hundred and twelve men, with Colonel Rugeley at their head, gave themselves up prisoners of war.* Cornwallis, mentioning the ludicrous affair in a letter to Tarleton, adds sarcastically: "Rugeley will not be made a brigadier." The unlucky colonel never again appeared in arms.

The first care of General Greene was to reorganize his army. He went to work quietly but resolutely: called no councils of war; communicated his plans and intentions to few, and such only as were able and willing to aid in executing them. "If I cannot inspire respect and confidence by an independent conduct," said he, "it will be impossible to instil discipline and order among the troops." His efforts were successful; the army soon began to assume what he termed a military complexion.

He was equally studious to promote harmony among his officers, of whom a number were young, gallant, and intelligent. It was his delight to have them at his genial but simple table, where parade and restraint were banished, and pleasant and

* Williams' Narrative.

instructive conversation was promoted; which, next to reading, was his great enjoyment. The manly benignity of his manners diffused itself round his board, and a common sentiment of affection for their chief united the young men in a kind of brotherhood.

Finding the country round Charlotte exhausted by repeated foragings, he separated the army into two divisions. One, about one thousand strong, was commanded by Brigadier-general Morgan, of rifle renown, and was composed of four hundred Continental infantry, under Lieutenant-colonel Howard of the Maryland line, two companies of Virginia militia under Captains Tripplet and Tate, and one hundred dragoons, under Lieutenant-colonel Washington. With these Morgan was detached towards the district of Ninety-Six, in South Carolina, with orders to take a position near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers, and assemble the militia of the country. With the other division, Greene made a march of toilful difficulty through a barren country, with waggons and horses quite unfit for service, to Hicks' Creek, in Chesterfield district, on the east side of the Pedee River, opposite the Cheraw Hills. There he posted himself, on the 26th, partly to discourage the enemy from attempting to possess themselves of Cross Creek, which would give them command of the greatest part of the provisions of the lower country —partly to form a camp of repose; "and no army," writes he, "ever wanted one more, the troops having totally lost their discipline."

"I will not pain your Excellency," writes he to Washington, "with further accounts of the wants and sufferings of this army; but I am not without great apprehension of its entire dissolution, unless the commissary's and quartermaster's departments can be

rendered more competent to the demands of the service. Nor are the clothing and hospital departments upon a better footing. Not a shilling in the pay chest, nor a prospect of any for months to come. This is really making bricks without straw."

Governor Rutledge also wrote to Washington from Greene's camp, on the 28th of December, imploring aid for South Carolina. "Some of the stanch inhabitants of Charleston," writes he, "have been sent to St. Augustine, and others are to follow. The enemy have hanged many people, who, from fear, or the impracticability of removing, had received protections or given paroles, and from attachment to, had afterwards taken part with us. They have burnt a great number of houses, and turned many women, formerly of good fortune, with their children (whom their husbands or parents, from an unwillingness to join the enemy, had left) almost naked into the woods. Their cruelty and the distresses of the people are indeed beyond description. I entreat your Excellency, therefore, seriously to consider the unhappy state of South Carolina and Georgia; and I rely on your humanity and your knowledge of their importance to the Union, for such speedy and effectual support, as may compel the enemy to evacuate every part of these countries" *

* Correspondence of the Revolution, iii., 188.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOSTILE EMBARKATIONS TO THE SOUTH—ARNOLD IN COMMAND—NECESSITOUS STATE OF THE COUNTRY—WASHINGTON URGES A FOREIGN LOAN—MISSION OF COLONEL LAURENS TO FRANCE TO SEEK AID IN MEN AND MONEY—GRIEVANCES OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE—MUTINY—NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MUTINEERS—ARTICLES OF ACCOMMODATION—POLICY DOUBTED BY WASHINGTON—RIGOROUS COURSE ADOPTED BY HIM WITH OTHER MALCONTENTS—SUCCESSFUL—RATIFICATION OF THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION OF THE STATES.

THE occurrences recorded in the last few chapters made Washington apprehend a design on the part of the enemy to carry the stress of war into the Southern States. Conscious that he was the man to whom all looked in time of emergency, and who was, in a manner, responsible for the general course of military affairs, he deeply felt the actual impotency of his position.

In a letter to Franklin, who was minister-plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles, he strongly expresses his chagrin. "Disappointed of the second division of French troops, but more especially in the expected naval superiority, which was the pivot upon which every thing turned; we have been compelled to spend an inactive campaign, after a flattering prospect at the opening of it, and vigorous struggles to make it a decisive one on our part. Latterly, we have been obliged to become spectators of a succession of detachments from the army at New York

in aid of Lord Cornwallis, while our naval weakness, and the political dissolution of a great part of our army, put it out of our power to counteract them at the southward, or to take advantage of them here."

The last of these detachments to the South took place on the 20th of December, but was not destined, as Washington had supposed, for Carolina. Sir Henry Clinton had received information that the troops already mentioned as being under General Leslie in the Chesapeake, had, by orders from Cornwallis, sailed for Charleston, to reinforce his lordship; and this detachment was to take their place in Virginia. It was composed of British, German, and refugee troops, about seventeen hundred strong, and was commanded by Benedict Arnold, now a brigadier-general in his majesty's service. Sir Henry Clinton, who distrusted the fidelity of the man he had corrupted, sent with him Colonels Dundas and Simcoe, experienced officers, by whose advice he was to be guided in every important measure. He was to make an incursion into Virginia, destroy the public magazines, assemble and arm the loyalists, and hold himself ready to co-operate with Lord Cornwallis. He embarked his troops in a fleet of small vessels, and departed on his enterprise animated by the rancorous spirit of a renegade, and prepared, as he vaunted, to give the Americans a blow "that would make the whole continent shake." We shall speak of his expedition hereafter.

As Washington beheld one hostile armament after another winging its way to the South, and received applications from that quarter for assistance, which he had not the means to furnish, it became painfully apparent to him, that the efforts to carry on the war had exceeded the natural capabilities of the country. Its widely diffused population, and the composition

and temper of some of its people, rendered it difficult to draw together its resources. Commerce was almost extinct; there was not sufficient natural wealth on which to found a revenue; paper currency had depreciated through want of funds for its redemption until it was nearly worthless. The mode of supplying the army by assessing a proportion of the productions of the earth, had proved ineffectual, oppressive, and productive of an alarming opposition. Domestic loans yielded but trifling assistance. The patience of the army was nearly exhausted; the people were dissatisfied with the mode of supporting the war, and there was reason to apprehend, that, under the pressure of impositions of a new and odious kind, they might imagine they had only exchanged one kind of tyranny for another.

We give but a few of many considerations which Washington was continually urging upon the attention of Congress in his full and perspicuous manner; the end of which was to enforce his opinion that a foreign loan was indispensably necessary to a continuance of the war.

His earnest counsels and entreaties were at length successful in determining Congress to seek aid both in men and money from abroad. Accordingly, on the 28th of December they commissioned Lieutenant-colonel John Laurens, special minister at the court of Versailles, to apply for such aid. The situation he had held, as aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, had given him an opportunity of observing the course of affairs, and acquainting himself with the wants and resources of the country; and he was instructed to confer with Washington, previous to his departure, as to the objects of his mission. Not content with impressing him verbally with his policy, Washington gave him a letter of instructions for his government, and to be used as occasion

might require. In this he advised him to solicit a loan sufficiently large to be a foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, to revive public credit, and give vigor to future operations ;—next to a loan of money, a naval force was to be desired, sufficient to maintain a constant superiority on the American coast; also additional succor in troops. In a word, a means of co-operation by sea and land, with purse and sword, competent by a decided effort to attain, once for all, the great objects of the alliance, the liberty and independence of the United States.

He was to show, at the same time, the ample means possessed by the nation to repay the loan, from its comparative freedom from debt, and its vast and valuable tracts of unsettled lands, the variety and fertility of its climates and soils, and its advantages of every kind for a lucrative commerce, and rapid increase of population and prosperity.

Scarce had Colonel Laurens been appointed to this mission, when a painful occurrence proved the urgent necessity of the required aid.

In the arrangement for winter-quarters, the Pennsylvania line, consisting of six regiments, was hutted near Morristown. These troops had experienced the hardships and privations common to the whole army. General Wayne, who commanded them, had a soldier's sympathy in the sufferings of his men, and speaks of them in feeling language: "Poorly clothed, badly fed, and worse paid," writes he, "some of them not having received a paper dollar for near twelve months; exposed to winter's piercing cold, to drifting snows and chilling blasts, with no protection but old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men. In this situation the enemy begin to work upon their passions, and have found means to circulate some

proclamations among them. * * * The officers in general, as well as myself, find it necessary to stand for hours every day exposed to wind and weather among the poor naked fellows, while they are working at their huts and redoubts, often assisting with our own hands, in order to produce a conviction to their minds that we share, and more than share, every vicissitude in common with them: sometimes asking to participate their bread and water. The good effect of this conduct is very conspicuous, and prevents their murmuring in public; but the delicate mind and eye of humanity are hurt, very much hurt, at their visible distress and private complainings."

How strongly is here depicted the trials to which the soldiers of the Revolution were continually subjected. But the Pennsylvania line had an additional grievance peculiar to themselves. Many of them had enlisted to serve "for three years, or during war," that is to say, for less than three years should the war cease in less time. When, however, having served for three years, they sought their discharge, the officers, loth to lose such experienced soldiers, interpreted the terms of enlistment to mean three years, or to the end of the war, should it continue for a longer time.

This chicanery naturally produced great exasperation. It was heightened by the conduct of a deputation from Pennsylvania, which, while it left veteran troops unpaid, distributed gold by handsful among raw six-month levies, whose time was expiring, as bounties on their re-enlisting for the war.

The first day of the New Year arrived. The men were excited by an extra allowance of ardent spirits. In the evening, at a preconcerted signal, a great part of the Pennsylvania line, non-commissioned officers included, turned out under arms, declaring their intention to march to Philadelphia, and demand redress

from Congress. Wayne endeavored to pacify them; they were no longer to be pacified by words. He cocked his pistols; in an instant their bayonets were at his breast. "We love, we respect you," cried they, "but you are a dead man if you fire. Do not mistake us; we are not going to the enemy: were they now to come out, you would see us fight under your orders with as much resolution and alacrity as ever." *

Their threat was not an idle one. In an attempt to suppress the mutiny there was a bloody affray, in which numbers were wounded on both sides; among whom were several officers. One captain was killed.

Three regiments which had taken no part in the mutiny were paraded under their officers. The mutineers compelled them to join their ranks. Their number being increased to about thirteen hundred, they seized upon six field-pieces, and set out in the night for Philadelphia under command of their sergeants.

Fearing the enemy might take advantage of this outbreak, Wayne detached a Jersey brigade to Chatham, and ordered the militia to be called out there. Alarm fires were kindled upon the hills; alarm guns boomed from post to post; the country was soon on the alert.

Wayne was not "Mad Anthony" on the present occasion. All his measures were taken with judgment and forecast. He sent provisions after the mutineers, lest they should supply their wants from the country people by force. Two officers of rank spurred to Philadelphia, to apprise Congress of the approach of the insurgents, and put it upon its guard. Wayne sent a despatch with news of the outbreak to Washington; he then mounted

* Quincy's Memoir of Major Shaw, p. 85.

his horse, and accompanied by Colonels Butler and Stewart, two officers popular with the troops, set off after the mutineers, either to bring them to a halt, or to keep with them, and seek every occasion to exert a favorable influence over them.

Washington received Wayne's letter at his head-quarters at New Windsor on the 3d of January. His first impulse was to set out at once for the insurgent camp. Second thoughts showed the impolicy of such a move. Before he could overtake the mutineers, they would either have returned to their duty, or their affair would be in the hands of Congress. How far, too, could his own troops be left with safety, distressed as they were for clothing and provisions? Beside, the navigation of the Hudson was still open; should any disaffection appear in the neighboring garrison of West Point, the British might send up an expedition from New York to take advantage of it. Under these circumstances, he determined to continue at New Windsor.

He wrote to Wayne, however, approving of his intention to keep with the troops, and improve every favorable interval of passion. His letter breathes that paternal spirit with which he watched over the army; and that admirable moderation mingled with discipline with which he managed and moulded their wayward moods. "Opposition," said he, "as it did not succeed in the first instance, cannot be effectual while the men remain together, but will keep alive resentment, and may tempt them to turn about and go in a body to the enemy; who, by their emissaries, will use every argument and means in their power to persuade them that it is their only asylum; which, if they find their passage stopped at the Delaware, and hear that the Jersey militia are collecting in their rear, they may think but too probable. I would, therefore, recommend it to you to cross the Delaware with

them, draw from them what they conceive to be their principal grievances, and promise faithfully to represent to Congress and to the State the substance of them, and endeavor to obtain a redress. If they could be stopped at Bristol or Germantown, the better. I look upon it, that if you can bring them to a negotiation, matters may be afterwards accommodated; but that an attempt to reduce them by force will either drive them to the enemy, or dissipate them in such a manner that they will never be recovered."

How clearly one reads in this letter that temperate and magnanimous spirit which moved over the troubled waters of the Revolution, allayed the fury of the storms, and controlled every thing into peace.

Having visited the Highland posts of the Hudson, and satisfied himself of the fidelity of the garrisons, Washington ordered a detachment of eleven hundred men to be ready to march at a moment's warning. General Knox, also, was despatched by him to the Eastern States, to represent to their governments the alarming crisis produced by a long neglect of the subsistence of the army, and to urge them to send on immediately money, clothing, and other supplies for their respective lines.

In the mean time, as Washington had apprehended, Sir Henry Clinton received intelligence at New York of the mutiny, and hastened to profit by it. Emissaries were despatched to the camp of the mutineers, holding out offers of pardon, protection, and ample pay, if they would return to their allegiance to the crown. On the 4th of January, although the rain poured in torrents, troops and cannon were hurried on board of vessels of every description, and transported to Staten Island, Sir Henry accompanying them. There they were to be held in readiness,

either to land at Amboy in the Jerseys, should the revolters be drawn in that direction, or to make a dash at West Point, should the departure of Washington leave that post assailable.

General Wayne and his companions, Colonels Butler and Stewart, had overtaken the insurgent troops on the 3d of January, at Middlebrook. They were proceeding in military form, under the control of a self-constituted board of sergeants, whose orders were implicitly obeyed. A sergeant-major, who had formerly deserted from the British army, had the general command.

Conferences were held by Wayne with sergeants delegated from each regiment. They appeared to be satisfied with the mode and promises of redress held out to them; but the main body of the mutineers persisted in revolt, and proceeded on the next day to Princeton. Wayne hoped they might continue further on, and would gladly have seen them across the Delaware, beyond the influence of the enemy; but their leaders clung to Princeton, lest in further movements they might not be able to keep their followers together. Their proceedings continued to be orderly; military forms were still observed; they obeyed their leaders, behaved well to the people of the country, and committed no excesses.

General Wayne and Colonels Butler and Stewart remained with them in an equivocal position; popular, but without authority, and almost in durance. The insurgents professed themselves still ready to march under them against the enemy, but would permit none other of their former officers to come among them. The Marquis de Lafayette, General St. Clair and Colonel Laurens, the newly-appointed minister to France, arrived at the camp and were admitted; but afterwards were ordered away at a short notice.

The news of the revolt caused great consternation in Philadelphia. A committee of Congress set off to meet the insurgents, accompanied by Reed, the president of Pennsylvania, and one or two other officers, and escorted by a city troop of horse. The committee halted at Trenton, whence President Reed wrote to Wayne, requesting a personal interview at four o'clock in the afternoon, at four miles' distance from Princeton. Wayne was moreover told to inform the troops, that he (Reed) would be there to receive any propositions from them, and redress any injuries they might have sustained; but that, after the indignities they had offered to the marquis and General St. Clair, he could not venture to put himself in their power.

Wayne, knowing that the letter was intended for his troops more than for himself, read it publicly on the parade. It had a good effect upon the sergeants and many of the men. The idea that the president of their State should have to leave the seat of government and stoop to treat with them, touched their sectional pride and their home feelings. They gathered round the horseman who had brought the letter, and inquired anxiously whether President Reed was unkindly disposed towards them; intimating privately their dislike to the business in which they were engaged.

Still, it was not thought prudent for President Reed to trust himself within their camp. Wayne promised to meet him on the following day (7th), though it seemed uncertain whether he was master of himself, or whether he was not a kind of prisoner. Tidings had just been received of the movements of Sir Henry Clinton, and of tempting overtures he intended to make, and it was feared the men might listen to them. Three of the light-horse were sent in the direction of Amboy to keep a look-out for any landing of the enemy.

At this critical juncture, two of Sir Henry's emissaries arrived in the camp, and delivered to the leaders of the malcontents, a paper containing his seductive proposals and promises. The mutineers, though openly arrayed in arms against their government, spurned at the idea of turning "Arnolds," as they termed it. The emissaries were seized and conducted to General Wayne, who placed them in confinement, promising that they should be liberated, should the pending negotiation fail.

This incident had a great effect in inspiring hope of the ultimate loyalty of the troops; and the favorable representations of the temper of the men, made by General Wayne in a personal interview, determined President Reed to venture among them. The consequences of their desertion to the enemy were too alarming to be risked. "I have but one life to lose," said he, "and my country has the first claim to it." *

As he approached Princeton with his suite, he found guards regularly posted, who turned out and saluted him in military style. The whole line was drawn out under arms near the college, and the artillery on the point of firing a salute. He prevented it, lest it should alarm the country. It was a hard task for him to ride along the line as if reviewing troops regularly organized; but the crisis required some sacrifice of the kind. The sergeants were all in the places of their respective officers, and saluted the president as he passed; never were mutineers more orderly and decorous.

The propositions now offered to the troops were:—To discharge all those who had enlisted indefinitely for three years or during the war; the fact to be inquired into by three commis-

* Letter to the Executive Council.

sioners appointed by the executive—where the original enlistment could not be produced in evidence, the oath of the soldier to suffice.

To give immediate certificates for the deficit in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency, and the arrearages to be settled as soon as circumstances would permit.

To furnish them immediately with certain specified articles of clothing which were most wanted.

These propositions proving satisfactory, the troops set out for Trenton, where the negotiation was concluded.

Most of the artillerists and many of the infantry obtained their discharges; some on their oaths, others on account of the vague terms under which they had been enlisted; forty days' furlough was given to the rest, and thus, for a time, the whole insurgent force was dissolved.

The two spies who had tampered with the fidelity of the troops, were tried by a court-martial, found guilty, and hanged at the cross-roads near Trenton. A reward of fifty guineas each, was offered to two sergeants who had arrested and delivered them up. They declined accepting it; saying, they had merely acted by order of the board of sergeants. The hundred guineas were then offered to the board. Their reply is worthy of record. "It was not," said they, "for the sake or through any expectation of reward, but for the love of our country, that we sent the spies immediately to General Wayne; we therefore do not consider ourselves entitled to any other reward but the love of our country, and do jointly agree, to accept of no other."

The accommodation entered into with the mutineers of the Pennsylvania line appeared to Washington of doubtful policy, and likely to have a pernicious effect on the whole army. His

apprehensions were soon justified by events. On the night of the 20th of January, a part of the Jersey troops, stationed at Pompton, rose in arms, claiming the same terms just yielded to the Pennsylvanians. For a time, it was feared the revolt would spread throughout the line.

Sir Henry Clinton was again on the alert. Troops were sent to Staten Island to be ready to cross into the Jerseys, and an emissary was despatched to tempt the mutineers with seductive offers.

In this instance, Washington adopted a more rigorous course than in the other. The present insurgents were not so formidable in point of numbers as the Pennsylvanians; the greater part of them, also, were foreigners, for whom he felt less sympathy than for native troops. He was convinced too of the fidelity of the troops under his immediate command, who were from the Eastern States. A detachment from the Massachusetts line was sent under Major-general Howe, who was instructed to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission; to grant them no terms while in arms, or in a state of resistance; and on their surrender, instantly to execute a few of the most active and incendiary leaders. "You will also try," added he, "to avail yourself of the services of the militia, representing to them how dangerous to civil liberty, is the precedent of armed soldiers dictating to their country."

His orders were punctually obeyed, and were crowned with complete success. Howe had the good fortune, after a tedious night march, to surprise the mutineers napping in their huts just at daybreak. Five minutes only were allowed them to parade without their arms and give up their ringleaders. This was instantly complied with, and two of them were executed on the spot.

Thus, the mutiny was quelled, the officers resumed their command, and all things were restored to order.*

Thus terminated an insurrection, which, for a time, had spread alarm among the friends of American liberty, and excited the highest hopes of its foes. The circumstances connected with it had ultimately a beneficial effect in strengthening the confidence of those friends, by proving that, however the Americans might quarrel with their own government, nothing could again rally them under the royal standard.

A great cause of satisfaction to Washington was the ratification of the articles of confederation between the States, which took place not long after this agitating juncture. A set of articles had been submitted to Congress by Dr. Franklin, as far back as 1775. A form had been prepared and digested by a committee in 1776, and agreed upon, with some modifications in 1777, but had ever since remained in abeyance, in consequence of objections made by individual States. The confederation was now complete, and Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, congratulated him and the body over which he presided, on an event long wished for, and which he hoped would have the happiest effects upon the politics of this country, and be of essential service to our cause in Europe.

It was, after all, an instrument far less efficacious than its advocates had anticipated; but it served an important purpose in binding the States together as a nation, and keeping them from falling asunder into individual powers, after the pressure of external danger should cease to operate.

* Memoir of Major Shaw, by Hon. Josiah Quincy, p. 89.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXPEDITION OF ARNOLD INTO VIRGINIA—BUCCANEERING RAVAGES—CHECKED BY STEUBEN—ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH—CONGRESS RESOLVES TO FORM HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS—HAMILTON SUGGESTED BY SULLIVAN FOR DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE—HIGH OPINION OF HIM EXPRESSED BY WASHINGTON—MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HAMILTON AND THE COMMANDER-IN CHIEF.

The armament with which Arnold boasted he was "to shake the continent," met with that boisterous weather which often rages along our coast in the winter. His ships were tempest-tost and scattered, and half of his cavalry horses and several of his guns had to be thrown overboard. It was the close of the year when he anchored in the Chesapeake.

Virginia, at the time, was almost in a defenceless state. Baron Steuben, who had the general command there, had recently detached such of his regular troops as were clothed and equipped, to the South, to reinforce General Greene. The remainder, five or six hundred in number, deficient in clothing, blankets, and tents, were scarcely fit to take the field, and the volunteers and militia lately encamped before Portsmouth, had been disbanded. Governor Jefferson, on hearing of the arrival of the fleet, called out the militia from the neighboring counties; but few could be collected on the spur of the moment, for the whole country was

terror-stricken and in confusion. Having land and sea forces at his command, Arnold opened the new year with a buccaneering ravage. Ascending James River with some small vessels which he had captured, he landed on the fourth of January with nine hundred men at Westover, about twenty-five miles below Richmond, and pushed for the latter place, at that time little more than a village, though the metropolis of Virginia. Halting for the night within twelve miles of it, he advanced on the following day with as much military parade as possible, so as to strike terror into a militia patrol, which fled back to Richmond, reporting that a British force, fifteen hundred strong, was at hand.

It was Arnold's hope to capture the governor; but the latter, after providing for the security of as much as possible of the public stores, had left Richmond the evening before on horseback to join his family at Tuckahoe, whence, on the following day, he conveyed them to a place of safety. Governor Jefferson got back by noon to Manchester, on the opposite side of James River, in time to see Arnold's marauders march into the town. Many of the inhabitants had fled to the country; some stood terrified spectators on the hills; not more than two hundred men were in arms for the defence of the place; these, after firing a few volleys, retreated to Richmond and Shockoe Hills, whence they were driven by the cavalry, and Arnold had possession of the capital. He sent some of the citizens to the governor, offering to spare the town, provided his ships might come up James River to be laden with tobacco from the warehouses. His offer was indignantly rejected, whereupon fire was set to the public edifices, stores, and workshops; private houses were pillaged, and a great quantity of tobacco consumed.

While this was going on, Colonel Simcoe had been detached

to Westham, six miles up the river, where he destroyed a cannon foundry and sacked a public magazine; broke off the trunnions of the cannon, and threw into the river the powder which he could not carry away, and, after effecting a complete devastation, rejoined Arnold at Richmond, which during the ensuing night resounded with the drunken orgies of the soldiery.

Having completed his ravage at Richmond, Arnold re-embarked at Westover and fell slowly down the river, landing occasionally to burn, plunder, and destroy; pursued by Steuben with a few Continental troops and all the militia that he could muster. General Nelson, also, with similar levies opposed him. Lower down the river some skirmishing took place, a few of Arnold's troops were killed and a number wounded, but he made his way to Portsmouth, opposite Norfolk, where he took post on the 20th of January, and proceeded to fortify.

Steuben would have attempted to drive him from this position, but his means were totally inadequate. Collecting from various parts of the country all the force that could be mustered, he so disposed it at different points as to hem the traitor in, prevent his making further incursions, and drive him back to his intrenchments should he attempt any.

Governor Jefferson returned to Richmond after the enemy had left it, and wrote thence to the commander-in-chief an account of this ravaging incursion of "the parricide Arnold." It was mortifying to Washington to see so inconsiderable a party committing such extensive depredations with impunity, but it was his opinion that their principal object was to make a diversion in favor of Cornwallis; and as the evils to be apprehended from Arnold's predatory incursions were not to be compared with the injury to the common cause, and the danger to Virginia in par-

ticular, which would result from the conquest of the States to the southward, he adjured Jefferson not to permit attention to immediate safety so to engross his thoughts as to divert him from measures for reinforcing the Southern army.

About this time an important resolution was adopted in Congress. Washington had repeatedly, in his communications to that body, attributed much of the distresses and disasters of the war to the congressional mode of conducting business through committees and "boards," thus causing irregularity and delay, preventing secrecy and augmenting expense. He was greatly rejoiced, therefore, when Congress decided to appoint heads of departments; secretaries of foreign affairs, of war and of marine, and a superintendent of finance. "I am happy, thrice happy, on private as well as public account," writes he, "to find that these are in train. For it will ease my shoulders of an immense burthen, which the deranged and perplexed situation of our affairs, and the distresses of every department of the army, had placed upon them."

General Sullivan, to whom this was written, and who was in Congress, was a warm friend of Washington's aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, and he sounded the commander-in-chief as to the qualifications of the colonel to take charge of the department of finance. "I am unable to answer," replied Washington, "because I never entered upon a discussion with him, but this I can venture to advance, from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found of his age, who have more general knowledge than he possesses; and none whose soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue."

This was a warm eulogium for one of Washington's circum-

spect character, but it was sincere. Hamilton had been four years in his military family, and always treated by him with marked attention and regard. Indeed, it had surprised many to see so young a man admitted like a veteran into his counsels. It was but a few days after Washington had penned the eulogium just quoted, when a scene took place between him and the man he had praised so liberally, that caused him deep chagrin. We give it as related by Hamilton himself, in a letter to General Schuyler, one of whose daughters he had recently married.

"An unexpected change has taken place in my situation," writes Hamilton (Feb. 18). "I am no longer a member of the general's family. This information will surprise you, and the manner of the change will surprise you more. Two days ago the general and I passed each other on the stairs:—he told me he wanted to speak to me. I answered that I would wait on him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

"Returning to the general, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner, which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt. Instead of finding the general, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, where, accosting me in an angry tone, 'Colonel Hamilton (said he), you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes;—I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect.' I replied, without petulancy, but with decision, 'I am not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part.' 'Very well, sir (said he), if

it be your choice,' or something to this effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe my absence, which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

"In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me in the general's name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, &c., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion. I requested Mr. Tilghman to tell him, —1st. That I had taken my resolution in a manner not to be revoked. 2d. That as a conversation could serve no other purpose than to produce explanations, mutually disagreeable, though I certainly would not refuse an interview, if he desired it, yet I would be happy, if he would permit me to decline it. 3d. That though determined to leave the family, the same principles which had kept me so long in it, would continue to direct my conduct towards him when out of it. 4th. That, however, I did not wish to distress him, or the public business, by quitting him before he could derive other assistance by the return of some of the gentlemen who were absent. 5th. And that, in the mean time, it depended on him to let our behavior to each other be the same as if nothing had happened. He consented to decline the conversation, and thanked me for my offer of continuing my aid in the manner I had mentioned.

"I have given you so particular a detail of our difference, from the desire I have to justify myself in your opinion. Perhaps you may think I was precipitate in rejecting the overture made by the general to an accommodation. I assure you, my dear sir, it was not the effect of resentment; it was the deliberate result of maxims I had long formed for the government of my own conduct."

In considering this occurrence, as stated by Hamilton himself, we think he was in the wrong. His hurrying past the general on the stairs without pausing, although the latter expressed a wish to speak with him; his giving no reason for his haste, which, however "pressing" the letter he had to deliver, he could have spared at least a moment to do; his tarrying below to talk with the Marquis de Lafayette, the general all this time remaining at the head of the stairs, had certainly an air of great disrespect, and we do not wonder that the commander-in-chief was deeply offended at being so treated by his youthful aide-de-camp. His expression of displeasure was measured and dignified, however irritated he may have been, and such an explanation, at least, was due to him, as Hamilton subsequently rendered to General Schuyler, through a desire to justify himself in that gentleman's opinion. The reply of Hamilton, on the contrary, savored very much of petulance, however devoid he may have considered it of that quality, and his avowed determination "to part," simply because taxed by the general with want of respect, was singularly curt and abrupt.

Washington's subsequent overture, intended to soothe the wounded sensitiveness of Hamilton and soften the recent rebuke, by assurances of unaltered confidence and esteem, strikes us as in the highest degree noble and gracious, and furnishes another instance of that magnanimity which governed his whole conduct. We trust that General Schuyler, in reply to Hamilton's appeal, intimated that he had indeed been precipitate in rejecting such an overture.

The following passage in Hamilton's letter to Schuyler, gives the real key to his conduct on this occasion.

"I always disliked the office of an aide-de-camp, as having

in it a kind of personal dependence. I refused to serve in this capacity with two Major-generals, at an early period of the war. Infected, however, with the enthusiasm of the times, an idea of the General's character overcame my scruples, and induced me to accept his invitation to enter into his family. * * It has been often with great difficulty that I have prevailed on myself not to renounce it; but while, from motives of public utility, I was doing violence to my feelings, I was always determined, if there should ever happen a breach between us, never to consent to an accommodation. I was persuaded that when once that nice barrier which marked the boundaries of what we owed to each other should be thrown down, it might be propped again, but could never be restored."

Hamilton, in fact, had long been ambitious of an independent position, and of some opportunity, as he said, "to raise his character above mediocrity." When an expedition by Lafayette against Staten Island had been meditated in the autumn of 1780, he had applied to the commander-in-chief, through the Marquis, for the command of a battalion, which was without a field officer. Washington had declined on the ground that giving him a whole battalion might be a subject of dissatisfaction, and that should any accident happen to him in the actual state of affairs at head-quarters, the commander-in-chief would be embarrassed for want of his assistance.

He had next been desirous of the post of adjutant-general, which Colonel Alexander Scammel was about to resign, and was recommended for that office by Lafayette and Greene, but, before their recommendations reached Washington, he had already sent in to Congress the name of Brigadier-general Hand, who received the nomination.

These disappointments may have rendered Hamilton doubtful of his being properly appreciated by the commander-in-chief; impaired his devotion to him, and determined him, as he says, "if there should ever happen a breach between them, never to consent to an accommodation." It almost looks as if, in his high-strung and sensitive mood, he had been on the watch for an offence, and had grasped at the shadow of one.

Some short time after the rupture had taken place, Washington received a letter from Lafayette, then absent in Virginia, in which the Marquis observes, "Considering the footing I am upon with your Excellency, it would, perhaps, appear strange to you, that I never mentioned a circumstance which lately happened in your family. I was the first who knew of it, and from that moment exerted every means in my power to prevent a separation, which I knew was not agreeable to your Excellency. To this measure I was prompted by affection to you; but I thought it was improper to mention any thing about it, until you were pleased to impart it to me."

The following was Washington's reply: "The event, which you seem to speak of with regret, my friendship for you would most assuredly have induced me to impart to you the moment it happened, had it not been for the request of Hamilton, who desired that no mention should be made of it. Why this injunction on me, while he was communicating it himself, is a little extraordinary. But I complied, and religiously fulfilled it."

We are happy to add, that though a temporary coolness took place between the commander-in-chief and his late favorite aide-de-camp, it was but temporary. The friendship between these illustrious men was destined to survive the Revolution, and to

signalize itself through many eventful years, and stands recorded in the correspondence of Washington almost at the last moment of his life.*

* His last letter to Hamilton, in which he assures him of "his very great esteem and regard," was written by Washington but two days before his death. SPARKS, xi., 469.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CORNWALLIS PREPARES TO INVADE NORTH CAROLINA—TARLETON SENT AGAINST MORGAN—BATTLE AT COWPENS—MORGAN PUSHES FOR THE CATAWBA WITH SPOILS AND PRISONERS—CORNWALLIS ENDEAVORS TO INTERCEPT HIM—THE RISING OF THE RIVER—CORNWALLIS AT RAMSOUR'S MILLS.

THE stress of war, as Washington apprehended, was at present shifted to the South. In a former chapter, we left General Greene, in the latter part of December, posted with one division of his army on the east side of the Pedee River in North Carolina, having detached General Morgan with the other division, one thousand strong, to take post near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers in South Carolina.

Cornwallis lay encamped about seventy miles to the southwest of Greene, at Winnsborough in Fairfield district. General Leslie had recently arrived at Charleston from Virginia, and was advancing to reinforce him with fifteen hundred men. This would give Cornwallis such a superiority of force, that he prepared for a second invasion of North Carolina. His plan was to leave Lord Rawdon at the central post of Camden with a considerable body of troops to keep all quiet, while his lordship by rapid marches would throw himself between Greene and Virginia, cut him off from all reinforcements in that quarter, and oblige him either to make battle with his present force, or retreat pre-

cipitately from North Carolina, which would be disgraceful.* In either case Cornwallis counted on a general rising of the royalists; a re-establishment of regal government in the Carolinas, and the clearing away of all impediments to further triumphs in Virginia and Maryland.

By recent information, he learnt that Morgan had passed both the Catawba and Broad Rivers, and was about seventy miles to the northwest of him, on his way to the district of Ninety-Six. As he might prove extremely formidable if left in his rear, Tarleton was sent in quest of him, with about three hundred and fifty of his famous cavalry, a corps of legion and light infantry, and a number of the royal artillery with two field pieces; about eleven hundred choice troops in all. His instructions were to pass Broad River for the protection of Ninety-Six, and either to strike at Morgan and push him to the utmost; or to drive him out of the country, so as to prevent his giving any trouble on that side.

Cornwallis moved with his main force on the 12th of December, in a northwest direction between the Broad River and the Catawba, leading toward the back country. This was for the purpose of crossing the great rivers at their fords near their sources; for they are fed by innumerable petty streams which drain the mountains, and are apt in the winter time, when storms of rain prevail, to swell and become impassable below their forks. He took this route also, to cut off Morgan's retreat, or prevent his junction with Greene, should Tarleton's expedition fail of its object. General Leslie, whose arrival was daily expected, was to move up along the eastern side of the Wateree and Catawba,

* Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, March 17.

keeping parallel with his lordship and joining him above. Every thing on the part of Cornwallis was well planned, and seemed to promise him a successful campaign.

Tarleton, after several days' hard marching, came upon the traces of Morgan, who was posted on the north bank of the Pacolet, to guard the passes of that river. He sent word to Cornwallis of his intention to force a passage across the river, and compel Morgan either to fight or retreat, and suggested that his lordship should proceed up the eastern bank of Broad River, so as to be at hand to co-operate. His lordship, in consequence, took up a position at Turkey Creek, on Broad River.

Morgan had been recruited by North Carolina and Georgia militia, so that his force was nearly equal in number to that of Tarleton, but, in point of cavalry and discipline, vastly inferior. Cornwallis, too, was on his left, and might get in his rear; checking his impulse, therefore, to dispute the passage of the Pacolet, he crossed that stream and retreated towards the upper fords of Broad River.

Tarleton reached the Pacolet on the evening of the 15th, but halted on observing some troops on the opposite bank. It was merely a party of observation which Morgan had left there, but he supposed that officer to be there in full force After some manœuvring to deceive his adversary, he crossed the river before daylight at Easterwood shoals. There was no opposition. Still he proceeded warily, until he learnt that Morgan, instead of being in his neighborhood, was in full march toward Broad River. Tarleton now pressed on in pursuit. At ten o'clock at night he reached an encampment which Morgan had abandoned a few hours previously, apparently in great haste, for the camp fires were still smoking, and provisions had been left behind half-

cooked. Eager to come upon his enemy while in the confusion of a hurried flight, Tarleton allowed his exhausted troops but a brief repose, and, leaving his baggage under a guard, resumed his dogged march about two o'clock in the night; tramping forward through swamps and rugged broken grounds, round the western side of Thickety Mountain. A little before daylight of the 17th, he captured two videttes, from whom he learnt, to his surprise, that Morgan, instead of a headlong retreat, had taken a night's repose, and was actually preparing to give him battle.

Morgan, in fact, had been urged by his officers to retreat across Broad River, which was near by, and make for the mountainous country; but, closely pressed as he was, he feared to be overtaken while fording the river, and while his troops were fatigued, and in confusion; beside, being now nearly equal in number to the enemy, military pride would not suffer him to avoid a combat.

The place where he came to halt, was known in the early grants by the name of Hannah's Cowpens, being part of a grazing establishment of a man named Hannah. It was in an open wood, favorable to the action of cavalry. There were two eminences of unequal height, and separated from each other by an interval about eighty yards wide. To the first eminence, which was the highest, there was an easy ascent of about three hundred yards. On these heights Morgan had posted himself. His flanks were unprotected, and the Broad River, running parallel on his rear, about six miles distant, and winding round on the left, would cut off retreat, should the day prove unfortunate.

The ground, in the opinion of tacticians, was not well chosen; Morgan, a veteran bush-fighter, vindicated it in after times in his own characteristic way. "Had I crossed the river, one

half of the militia would have abandoned me. Had a swamp been in view, they would have made for it. As to covering my wings, I knew the foe I had to deal with, and that there would be nothing but downright fighting. As to a retreat, I wished to cut off all hope of one. Should Tarleton surround me with his cavalry, it would keep my troops from breaking away, and make them depend upon their bayonets. When men are forced to fight, they will sell their lives dearly."

In arranging his troops for action, he drew out his infantry in two lines. The first was composed of the North and South Carolina militia, under Colonel Pickens, having an advanced corps of North Carolina and Georgia volunteer riflemen. This line, on which he had the least dependence, was charged to wait until the enemy were within dead shot; then to take good aim, fire two volleys and fall back.

The second line, drawn up a moderate distance in the rear of the first, and near the brow of the main eminence, was composed of Colonel Howard's light infantry and the Virginia riflemen; all Continental troops. They were informed of the orders which had been given to the first line, lest they should mistake their falling back for a retreat. Colonel Howard had the command of this line, on which the greatest reliance was placed.

About a hundred and fifty yards in the rear of the second line, and on the slope of the lesser eminence, was Colonel Washington's troop of cavalry, about eighty strong; with about fifty mounted Carolinian volunteers, under Major McCall, armed with sabres and pistols.

British writers of the day gave Morgan credit for uncommon ability and judgment in the disposition of his force; placing the militia, in whom he had no great confidence, in full view on the

edge of the wood, and keeping his best troops out of sight, but drawn up in excellent order and prepared for all events.*

It was about eight o'clock in the morning (Jan. 17th), when Tarleton came up. The position of the Americans seemed to him to give great advantage to his cavalry, and he made hasty preparation for immediate attack, anticipating an easy victory. Part of his infantry he formed into a line, with dragoons on each flank. The rest of the infantry and cavalry were to be a reserve, and to wait for orders.

There was a physical difference in the condition of the adverse troops. The British were haggard from want of sleep and a rough night-tramp; the Americans, on the contrary, were fresh from a night's rest, invigorated by a morning's meal, and deliberately drawn up. Tarleton took no notice of these circumstances, or disregarded them. Impetuous at all times, and now confident of victory, he did not even wait until the reserve could be placed, but led on his first line, which rushed shouting to the attack. The North Carolina and Georgia riflemen in the advance, delivered their fire with effect, and fell back to the flanks of Pickens' militia. These, as they had been instructed, waited until the enemy were within fifty yards, and then made a destructive volley, but soon gave way before the push of the bayonet. The British infantry pressed up to the second line, while forty of their cavalry attacked it on the right, seeking to turn its flank. Colonel Howard made a brave stand, and for some time there was a bloody conflict; seeing himself, however, in danger of being outflanked, he endeavored to change his front to the right. His orders were misunderstood, and his troops were fall-

* Annual Register, 1781, p. 56.

ing into confusion, when Morgan rode up and ordered them to retreat over the hill, where Colonel Washington's cavalry were hurried forward for their protection.

The British, seeing the troops retiring over the hill, rushed forward irregularly in pursuit of what they deemed a routed foe. To their astonishment, they were met by Colonel Washington's dragoons, who spurred on them impetuously, while Howard's infantry facing about, gave them an effective volley of musketry, and then charged with the bayonet.

The enemy now fell into complete confusion. Some few artillerymen attempted to defend their guns, but were cut down or taken prisoners, and the cannon and colors captured. A panic seized upon the British troops, aided no doubt by fatigue and exhaustion. A general flight took place. Tarleton endeavored to bring his legion cavalry into action to retrieve the day. They had stood aloof as a reserve, and now, infected by the panic, turned their backs upon their commander, and galloped off though the woods, riding over the flying infantry.

Fourteen of his officers, however, and forty of his dragoons, remained true to him; with these he attempted to withstand the attack of Washington's cavalry, and a fierce melée took place; but on the approach of Howard's infantry Tarleton gave up all for lost, and spurred off with his few but faithful adherents, trusting to the speed of their horses for safety. They made for Hamilton's ford on Broad River, thence to seek the main army under Cornwallis.

The loss of the British in this action was ten officers and above one hundred men killed, two hundred wounded, and between five and six hundred rank and file made prisoners; while the Americans had but twelve men killed and sixty wounded.

The disparity of loss shows how complete had been the confusion and defeat of the enemy. "During the whole period of the war," says one of their own writers, "no other action reflected so much dishonor on the British arms." *

The spoils taken by Morgan, according to his own account, were two field-pieces, two standards, eight hundred muskets, one travelling forge, thirty-five waggons, seventy negroes, upwards of one hundred dragoon-horses, and all the music. The enemy, however, had destroyed most of their baggage, which was immense.

Morgan did not linger on the field of battle. Leaving Colonel Pickens with a body of militia under the protection of a flag, to bury the dead and provide for the wounded of both armies, he set out the same day about noon, with his prisoners and spoils. Lord Cornwallis, with his main force, was at Turkey Creek, only twenty-five miles distant, and must soon hear of the late battle. His object was to get to the Catawba before he could be intercepted by his lordship, who lay nearer than he did to the fords of that river. Before nightfall he crossed Broad River at the Cherokee ford, and halted for a few hours on its northern bank. Before daylight of the 18th he was again on the march. Colonel Washington, who had been in pursuit of the enemy, rejoined him in the course of the day, as also did Colonel Pickens, who had left such of the wounded as could not be moved, under the protection of the flag of truce.

Still fearing that he might be intercepted before he could reach the Catawba, he put his prisoners in charge of Colonel Washington and the cavalry, with orders to move higher up into

* Stedman, ii. p. 324.

the country and cross the main Catawba at the Island ford; while he himself pushed forward for that river by the direct route; thus to distract the attention of the enemy should they be in pursuit, and to secure his prisoners from being recaptured.

Cornwallis, on the eventful day of the 17th, was at his camp on Turkey Creek, confidently waiting for tidings from Tarleton of a new triumph, when, towards evening, some of his routed dragoons came straggling into camp, haggard and forlorn, to tell the tale of his defeat. It was a thunder-stroke. Tarleton defeated! and by the rude soldier he had been so sure of entrapping! It seemed incredible. It was confirmed, however, the next morning, by the arrival of Tarleton himself, discomfited and crest-fallen. In his account of the recent battle, he represented the force under Morgan to be two thousand. This exaggerated estimate, together with the idea that the militia would now be out in great force, rendered his lordship cautious. Supposing that Morgan, elated by his victory, would linger near the scene of his triumph, or advance toward Ninety-Six, Cornwallis remained a day or two at Turkey Creek to collect the scattered remains of Tarleton's forces, and to wait the arrival of General Leslie, whose march had been much retarded by the waters, but who "was at last out of the swamps."

On the 19th, having been rejoined by Leslie, his lordship moved towards King's Creek, and thence in the direction of King's Mountain, until informed of Morgan's retreat toward the Catawba. Cornwallis now altered his course in that direction, and, trusting that Morgan, encumbered, as he supposed him to be, by prisoners and spoils, might be overtaken before he could

cross that river, detached a part of his force, without baggage, in pursuit of him, while he followed on with the remainder.

Nothing, say the British chroniclers, could exceed the exertions of the detachment; but Morgan succeeded in reaching the Catawba and crossing it in the evening, just two hours before those in pursuit of him arrived on its banks. A heavy rain came on and fell all night, and by daybreak the river was so swollen as to be impassable.*

This sudden swelling of the river was considered by the Americans as something providential. It continued for several days, and gave Morgan time to send off his prisoners who had crossed several miles above, and to call out the militia of Mecklenburg and Rowan Counties to guard the fords of the river.†

Lord Cornwallis had moved slowly with his main body. He was encumbered by an immense train of baggage; the roads were through deep red clay, and the country was cut up by streams and morasses. It was not until the 25th, that he assembled his whole force at Ramsour's Mills, on the Little Catawba, as the south fork of that river is called, and learnt that Morgan had crossed the main stream. Now he felt the loss he had sustained in the late defeat of Tarleton, of a great part of his light troops, which are the life and spirit of an army, and especially

* Stedman, ii. 326. Cornwallis to Sir H. Clinton; see also Remembrancer, 1781, part 1. 303.

† This sudden swelling of the river has been stated by some writers as having taken place on the 29th, on the approach of Cornwallis's main force, whereas it took place on the 23d, on the approach of the *detachment* sent by his lordship in advance in pursuit of Morgan. The inaccuracy as to date has given rise to disputes among historians.

efficient in a thinly-peopled country of swamps and streams, and forests, like that he was entangled in.

In this crippled condition, he determined to relieve his army of every thing that could impede rapid movement in his future operations. Two days, therefore, were spent by him at Ramsour's Mills, in destroying all such baggage and stores as could possibly be spared. He began with his own. His officers followed his example. Superfluities of all kinds were sacrificed without flinching. Casks of wine and spirituous liquors were staved; quantities even of provisions were sacrificed. No waggons were spared but those laden with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and four empty ones, for the sick and wounded. The alacrity with which these sacrifices of comforts, conveniences, and even necessaries, were made, was honorable to both officers and men.*

The whole expedient was subsequently sneered at by Sir Henry Clinton, as being "something too like a Tartar move;" but his lordship was preparing for a trial of speed, where it was important to carry as light weight as possible.

* Annual Register, 1781, p. 53.

CHAPTER XIX

GREENE JOINS MORGAN ON THE CATAWBA—ADOPTS THE FABIAN POLICY—MOVEMENT OF CORNWALLIS TO CROSS THE CATAWBA—AFFAIR AT McGOWAN'S FORD—MILITIA SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT TARRANT'S TAVERN—CORNWALLIS CHECKED BY THE RISING OF THE YADKIN—CONTEST OF SKILL AND SPEED OF THE TWO ARMIES IN A MARCH TO THE BANKS OF THE DAN.

General Greene was gladdened by a letter from Morgan, written shortly after his defeat of Tarleton, and transmitted the news to Washington with his own generous comments. "The victory was complete," writes he, "and the action glorious. The brilliancy and success with which it was fought, does the highest honor to the American arms, and adds splendor to the character of the general and his officers. I must beg leave to recommend them to your Excellency's notice, and doubt not but from your representation, Congress will receive pleasure from testifying their approbation of their conduct."

Another letter from Morgan, written on the 25th, spoke of the approach of Cornwallis and his forces. "My numbers," writes he, "are at this time too weak to fight them. I intend to move towards Salisbury, to get near the main army. I think it would be advisable to join our forces, and fight them before they join Phillips, which they certainly will do if they are not stopped."

Greene had recently received intelligence of the landing of troops at Wilmington, from a British squadron, supposed to be a force under Arnold, destined to push up Cape Fear River, and co-operate with Cornwallis; he had to prepare, therefore, not only to succor Morgan, but to prevent this co-operation. He accordingly detached General Stevens with his Virginia militia (whose term of service was nearly expired) to take charge of Morgan's prisoners, and conduct them to Charlottesville in Virginia. At the same time he wrote to the Governors of North Carolina and Virginia, for all the aid they could furnish; to Steuben, to hasten forward his recruits, and to Shelby, Campbell and others, to take arms once more, and rival their achievements at King's Mountain.

This done, he left General Huger in command of the division on the Pedee, with orders to hasten on by forced marches to Salisbury, to join the other division; in the mean time he set off on horseback for Morgan's camp, attended merely by a guide, an aide-de-camp, and a sergeant's guard of dragoons. His object was to aid Morgan in assembling militia and checking the enemy until the junction of his forces could be effected. It was a hard ride of upwards of a hundred miles through a rough country. On the last day of January he reached Morgan's camp at Sherrard's ford on the east side of the Catawba. The British army lay on the opposite side of the river, but a few miles distant from it, and appeared to be making preparations to force a passage across, as it was subsiding, and would soon be fordable. Greene supposed Cornwallis had in view a junction with Arnold at Cape Fear; he wrote, therefore, to General Huger to hurry on, so that with their united forces they could give his lordship a defeat before he could effect the junction. "*I am not without hopes*,'

writes he, "*of ruining Lord Cornwallis if he persists in his mad scheme of pushing through the country;* and it is my earnest desire to form a junction as early for this purpose as possible. Desire Colonel Lee to force a march to join us. *Here is a fine field, and great glory ahead.*"

More correct information relieved him from the apprehension of a co-operation of Arnold and Cornwallis. The British troops which had landed at Wilmington, were merely a small detachment sent from Charleston to establish a military depot for the use of Cornwallis in his southern campaign. They had taken possession of Wilmington without opposition.

Greene now changed his plans. He was aware of the ill-provided state of the British army, from the voluntary destruction of their waggons, tents and baggage. Indeed, when he first heard of this measure, on his arriving at Sherrard's ford, he had exclaimed: "Then Cornwallis is ours." His plan now was to tempt the enemy continually with the prospect of a battle, but continually to elude one; to harass them by a long pursuit, draw them higher into the country, and gain time for the division advancing under Huger to join him. It was the Fabian policy that he had learnt under Washington, of whom he prided himself on being a disciple.

As the subsiding of the Catawba would enable Cornwallis to cross, Greene ordered Morgan to move off silently with his division, on the evening of the 31st, and to press his march all night, so as to gain a good start in advance, while he (Greene) would remain to bring on the militia, who were employed to check the enemy. These militia, assembled from the neighboring counties, did not exceed five hundred. Two hundred of them were distributed at different fords; the remaining three hundred, forming

a corps of mounted riflemen under General Davidson, were to watch the movements of the enemy, and attack him wherever he should make his main attempt to cross. When the enemy should have actually crossed, the different bodies of militia were to make the best of their way to a rendezvous, sixteen miles distant, on the road to Salisbury, where Greene would be waiting to receive them, and conduct their further movements.

While these dispositions were being made by the American commander, Cornwallis was preparing to cross the river. The night of the 31st was chosen for the attempt. To divert the attention of the Americans, he detached Colonels Webster and Tarleton with a part of the army to a public ford called Beattie's ford, where he supposed Davidson to be stationed There they were to open a cannonade, and make a feint of forcing a passage. The main attempt, however, was to be made six miles lower down, at McGowan's, a private and unfrequented ford, where little, if any, opposition was anticipated.

Cornwallis set out for that ford, with the main body of his army, at one o'clock in the morning. The night was dark and rainy. He had to make his way through a wood and swamp where there was no road. His artillery stuck fast. The line passed on without them. It was near daybreak by the time the head of the column reached the ford. To their surprise, they beheld numerous camp fires on the opposite bank. Word was hastily carried to Cornwallis that the ford was guarded. It was so indeed: Davidson was there with his riflemen.

His lordship would have waited for his artillery, but the rain was still falling, and might render the river unfordable. At that place the Catawba was nearly five hundred yards wide, about three feet deep, very rapid, and full of large stones. The troops

entered the river in platoons, to support each other against the current, and were ordered not to fire until they should gain the opposite bank. Colonel Hall, of the light infantry of the guards, led the way; the grenadiers followed. The noise of the water and the darkness covered their movements until they were nearly half-way across, when they were descried by an American sentinel. He challenged them three times, and receiving no answer, fired. Terrified by the report, the man who was guiding the British turned and fled. Colonel Hall, thus abandoned, led the way directly across the river; whereas the true ford inclined diagonally further down. Hall had to pass through deeper water, but he reached a part of the bank where it was unguarded. The American pickets, too, which had turned out at the alarm given by the sentinel, had to deliver a distant and slanting fire. Still it had its effect. Three of the British were killed, and thirty-six wounded. Colonel Hall pushed on gallantly, but was shot down as he ascended the bank. The horse on which Cornwallis rode was wounded, but the brave animal carried his lordship to the shore, where he sank under him. The steed of Brigadier-general O'Hara rolled over with him into the water, and General Leslie's horse was borne away by the tumultuous current and with difficulty recovered.

General Davidson hastened with his men towards the place where the British were landing. The latter formed as soon as they found themselves on firm ground, charged Davidson's men before he had time to get them in order, killed and wounded about forty, and put the rest to flight.

General Davidson was the last to leave the ground, and was killed just as he was mounting his horse. When the enemy had effected the passage, Tarleton was detached with his cavalry in

pursuit of the militia, most of whom dispersed to their homes. Eager to avenge his late disgrace, he scoured the country, and made for Tarrant's tavern, about ten miles distant, where about a hundred of them had assembled from different fords, on their way to the rendezvous, and were refreshing themselves. As Tarleton came clattering upon them with his legion, they ran to their horses, delivered a hasty fire, which emptied some of his saddles, and then made for the woods; a few of the worst mounted were overtaken and slain. Tarleton, in his account of his campaigns, made the number nearly fifty; but the report of a British officer, who rode over the ground shortly afterwards, reduced it to ten. The truth probably lay between. The survivors were dispersed beyond rallying. Tarleton, satisfied with his achievement, rejoined the main body. Had he scoured the country a few miles further, General Greene and his suite might have fallen into his hands.

The general, informed that the enemy had crossed the Catawba at daybreak, awaited anxiously at the rendezvous the arrival of the militia. It was not until after midnight that he heard of their utter dispersion, and of the death of Davidson. Apprehending the rapid advance of Cornwallis, he hastened to rejoin Morgan, who with his division was pushing forward for the Yadkin, first sending orders to General Huger to conduct the other division by the most direct route to Guilford Court-house, where the forces were to be united. Greene spurred forward through heavy rain and deep miry roads. It was a dreary ride and a lonely one, for he had detached his aides-de-camp in different directions, to collect the scattered militia. At mid-day he alighted, weary and travel-stained, at the inn at Salisbury, where the army physician who had charge of the sick and wounded prison-

ers received him at the door, and inquired after his well-being. "Fatigued, hungry, alone, and penniless," was Greene's heavy-hearted reply. The landlady, Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, overheard his desponding words. While he was seated at table, she entered the room, closed the door, and drawing from under her apron two bags of money, which she had carefully hoarded in those precarious times, "Take these," said the noble-hearted woman; "you will want them, and I can do without them." This is one of the numberless instances of the devoted patriotism of our women during the Revolution. Their patriotism was apt to be purer and more disinterested than that of the men.

Cornwallis did not advance so rapidly as had been apprehended. After crossing the Catawba, he had to wait for his waggons and artillery, which had remained on the other side in the woods; so that by nightfall of the 1st of February he was not more than five miles on the road to Salisbury. Eager to come up with the Americans, he mounted some of the infantry upon the baggage horses, joined them to the cavalry, and sent the whole forward under General O'Hara. They arrived on the banks of the Yadkin at night, between the 2d and 3d of February, just in time to capture a few waggons lingering in the rear of the American army, which had passed. The riflemen who guarded them retreated after a short skirmish. There were no boats with which to cross; the Americans had secured them on the other side. The rain which had fallen throughout the day had overflooded the ford by which the American cavalry had passed. The pursuers were again brought to a stand. After some doubt and delay, Cornwallis took his course up the south side of the Yadkin, and crossed by what is still called the Shallow ford, while Greene continued on unmolested to Guilford

Court-house, where he was joined by General Huger and his division on the 9th.

Cornwallis was now encamped about twenty-five miles above them, at the old Moravian town of Salem. Greene summoned a council of war (almost the only time he was known to do so), and submitted the question whether or not to offer battle. There was a unanimous vote in the negative. A fourth part of the force was on the sick list, from nakedness and exposure. The official returns gave but two thousand and thirty-six, rank and file, fit for duty. Of these upwards of six hundred were militia.

Cornwallis had from twenty-five hundred to three thousand men, including three hundred cavalry, all thoroughly disciplined and well equipped. It was determined to continue the retreat.

The great object of Greene now was to get across the river Dan, and throw himself into Virginia. With the reinforcements and assistance he might there expect to find, he hoped to effect the salvation of the South, and prevent the dismemberment of the Union. The object of Cornwallis was to get between him and Virginia, force him to a combat before he could receive those reinforcements, or enclose him in between the great rivers on the west, the sea on the east, and the two divisions of the British army under himself and Lord Rawdon on the north and south. His lordship had been informed that the lower part of the Dan, at present, could only be crossed in boats, and that the country could not afford a sufficient number for the passage of Greene's army; he trusted, therefore, to cut him off from the upper part of the river, where alone it was fordable. Greene, however, had provided against such a contingency. Boats had been secured at various places by his agents, and could be collected at a few hours' notice at the lower ferries. Instead, therefore, of striving

with his lordship for the upper fords, Greene shaped his course for Boyd's and Irwin's fords, just above the confluence of the Dan and Staunton rivers which forms the Roanoke, and about seventy miles from Guilford Court-house. This would give him twenty-five miles advantage of Lord Cornwallis at the outset. General Kosciuszko was sent with a party in advance to collect the boats and throw up breastworks at the ferries.

In ordering his march, General Greene took the lead with the main body, the baggage, and stores. General Morgan would have had the command of the rear-guard, composed of seven hundred of the most alert and active troops, cavalry and light infantry; but, being disabled by a violent attack of ague and rheumatism, it was given to Colonel Otho H. Williams (formerly adjutant-general), who had with him Colonels Howard, Washington, and Lee.

This corps, detached some distance in the rear, did infinite service. Being lightly equipped, it could manœuvre in front of the British line of march, break down bridges, sweep off provisions, and impede its progress in a variety of ways, while the main body moved forward unmolested. It was now that Cornwallis most felt the severity of the blow he had received at the battle of the Cowpens in the loss of his light troops, having so few to cope with the élite corps under Williams.

Great abilities were shown by the commanders on either side in this momentous trial of activity and skill. It was a long and severe march for both armies, through a wild and rough country, thinly peopled, cut up by streams, partly covered by forests, along deep and frozen roads, under drenching rains, without tents at night, and with scanty supplies of provisions. The British suffered the least, for they were well equipped and comfortably

clad; whereas the poor Americans were badly off for clothing, and many of them without shoes. The patriot armies of the Revolution, however, were accustomed in their winter marches to leave evidences of their hardships in bloody foot-prints.

We forbear to enter into the details of this masterly retreat, the many stratagems and manœuvres of the covering party to delay and hoodwink the enemy. Tarleton himself bears witness in his narrative, that every measure of the Americans was judiciously designed and vigorously executed. So much had Cornwallis been misinformed at the outset as to the means below of passing the river, and so difficult was it, from want of light troops, to gain information while on the march, that he pushed on in the firm conviction that he was driving the American army into a trap, and would give it a signal blow before it could cross the Dan.

In the mean time, Greene, with the main body, reached the banks of the river, and succeeded in crossing over with ease in the course of a single day at Boyd's and Irwin's ferries, sending back word to Williams, who with his covering party was far in the rear. That intelligent officer encamped, as usual, in the evening, at a wary distance in front of the enemy, but stole a march upon them after dark, leaving his camp fires burning. He pushed on all night, arrived at the ferry in the morning of the 15th, having marched forty miles within the last four and twenty hours; and made such despatch in crossing, that his last troops had landed on the Virginia shore by the time the astonished enemy arrived on the opposite bank. Nothing, according to their own avowal, could surpass the grief and vexation of the British at discovering, on their arrival at Boyd's ferry, "that all their toils and exertions had been vain, and that all their hopes were frustrated." *

* Annual Register, 1781.

CHAPTER XX.

CORNWALLIS TAKES POST AT HILLSBOROUGH—HIS PROCLAMATION—GREENE RECROSSES THE DAN—COUNTRY SCOURED BY LEE AND PICKENS—AFFAIR WITH COLONEL PYLE—MANŒUVRES OF CORNWALLIS TO BRING GREENE TO ACTION—BATTLE OF GUILFORD COURT-HOUSE—GREENE RETREATS TO TROUBLESOME CREEK—CORNWALLIS MARCHES TOWARD CAPE FEAR—GREENE PURSUES HIM—IS BROUGHT TO A STAND AT DEEP RIVER—DETERMINES TO FACE ABOUT AND CARRY THE WAR INTO SOUTH CAROLINA—CORNWALLIS MARCHES FOR VIRGINIA.

For a day the two armies lay panting within sight of each other on the opposite banks of the river, which had put an end to the race. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated the day of the crossing, Greene writes: "On the Dan River, almost fatigued to death, having had a retreat to conduct of upwards of two hundred miles, manœuvring constantly in the face of the enemy to give time for the militia to turn out and get off our stores." And to Washington he writes (Feb. 15), "Lord Cornwallis has been at our heels from day to day ever since we left Guilford, and our movements from thence to this place have been of the most critical kind, having a river in our front and the enemy in our rear. The miserable condition of the troops for clothing has rendered the march the most painful imaginable, many hundred of the soldiers tracking the ground with their bloody feet. Your feelings for the sufferings of the soldier, had you been with us, would

have been severely tried." He concludes by an honorable testimonial in their favor: "Our army are in good spirits, notwithstanding their sufferings and excessive fatigue."

On the 16th, the river began to subside; the enemy might soon be able to cross. Greene prepared for a further retreat by sending forward his baggage on the road to Halifax, and securing the passage of the Staunton. At Halifax he was resolved to make a stand, rather than suffer the enemy to take possession of it without a struggle. Its situation on the Roanoke would make it a strong position for their army, supported by a fleet, and would favor their designs both on Virginia and the Carolinas. With a view to its defence, intrenchments had already been thrown up, under the direction of Kosciuszko.

Lord Cornwallis, however, did not deem it prudent, under present circumstances, to venture into Virginia, where Greene would be sure of powerful reinforcements. North Carolina was in a state of the utmost disorder and confusion; he thought it better to remain in it for a time, and profit by having compelled Greene to abandon it. After giving his troops a day's repose, therefore, he put them once more in motion on the 18th, along the road by which he had pursued Greene. The latter, who was incessantly on the alert, was informed of this retrograde move, by a preconcerted signal; the waving of a white handkerchief, under covert of the opposite bank, by a female patriot.

This changed the game. Lee, with his legion, strengthened by two veteran Maryland companies, and Pickens, with a corps of South Carolina militia, all light troops, were transported across the Dan in the boats, with orders to gain the front of Cornwallis, hover as near as safety would permit, cut off his intercourse with the disaffected parts of the country, and check the rising of the

royalists. "If we can but delay him for a day or two," said Greene, "he must be ruined." Greene, in the mean while, remained with his main force on the northern bank of the Dan; waiting to ascertain his lordship's real designs, and ready to cross at a moment's warning.

The movements of Cornwallis, for a day or two, were of a dubious nature, designed to perplex his opponents; on the 20th, however, he took post at Hillsborough. Here he erected the royal standard, and issued a proclamation, stating that, whereas it had pleased Divine Providence to prosper the operations of his majesty's arms in driving the rebel army out of the province, he invited all his loyal subjects to hasten to this standard with their arms and ten days' provisions, to assist in suppressing the remains of rebellion, and re-establishing good order and constitutional government.

By another instrument, all who could raise independent companies were called upon to give in their names at head-quarters, and a bounty in money and lands was promised to those who should enlist under them. The companies thus raised were to be formed into regiments.

These sounding appeals produced but little effect on the people of the surrounding districts. Many hundreds, says Tarleton, rode into the camp to talk over the proclamation, inquire the news of the day, and take a view of the king's troops. The generality seemed desirous of peace, but averse from any exertion to procure it. They acknowledged that the Continentals had been chased out of the province, but apprehended they would soon return. "Some of the most zealous," adds he, "promised to raise companies, and even regiments; but their followers and dependents were slow to enlist." Tarleton himself was forth-

with detached with the cavalry and a small body of infantry, to a region of country lying between the Haw and Deep Rivers, to bring on a considerable number of loyalists who were said to be assembling there.

Rumor, in the mean time, had magnified the effect of his lordship's proclamations. Word was brought to Greene, that the tories were flocking from all quarters to the royal standard. Seven companies, it was said, had been raised in a single day. At this time the reinforcements to the American camp had been little more than six hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens. Greene saw that at this rate, if Cornwallis were allowed to remain undisturbed, he would soon have complete command of North Carolina; he boldly determined, therefore, to recross the Dan at all hazards with the scanty force at his command, and give his lordship check. In this spirit he broke up his camp and crossed the river on the 23d.

In the mean time, Lee and Pickens, who were scouting the country about Hillsborough, received information of Tarleton's recruiting expedition to the region between the Haw and Deep Rivers. There was no foe they were more eager to cope with; and they resolved to give him a surprise. Having forded the Haw one day about noon, they learnt from a countryman that Tarleton was encamped about three miles off, that his horses were unsaddled, and that every thing indicated confident security. They now pushed on under covert of the woods, prepared to give the bold partisan a blow after his own fashion. Before they reached the place Tarleton had marched on; they captured two of his staff, however, who had remained behind, settling with the people of a farm-house for supplies furnished to the detachment.

Being informed that Tarleton was to halt for the night at

the distance of six miles, they still trusted to surprise him. On the way, however, they had an encounter with a body of three or four hundred mounted royalists, armed with rifles, and commanded by a Colonel Pyle, marching in quest of Tarleton. As Lee with his cavalry was in the advance, he was mistaken for Tarleton, and hailed with loyal acclamations. He favored the mistake, and was taking measures to capture the royalists, when some of them, seeing the infantry under Pickens, discovered their error and fired upon the rear-guard. The cavalry instantly charged upon them; ninety were cut down and slain, and a great number wounded; among the latter was Colonel Pyle himself, who took refuge among thickets on the borders of a piece of water which still bears his name. The Americans alleged in excuse for the slaughter, that it was provoked by their being attacked; and that the sabre was used, as a continued firing might alarm Tarleton's camp. We do not wonder, however, that British writers pronounced it a massacre; though it was but following the example set by Tarleton himself, in this ruthless campaign.

After all, Lee and Pickens missed the object of their enterprise. The approach of night and the fatigue of their troops, made them defer their attack upon Tarleton until morning. In the mean time, the latter had received an express from Cornwallis, informing him that Greene had passed the Dan, and ordering him to return to Hillsborough as soon as possible. He hastened to obey. Lee with his legion was in the saddle before daybreak; but Tarleton's troops were already on the march. "The legion," writes Lee, "accustomed to night expeditions, had been in the habit of using pine-torch for flambeau. Supplied with this,

though the morning was dark, the enemy's trail was distinctly discovered, whenever a divergency took place in his route.

Before sunrise, however, Tarleton had forded the Haw, and "Light Horse Harry" gave over the pursuit, consoling himself that though he had not effected the chief object of his enterprise, a secondary one was completely executed, which would repress the tory spirit just beginning to burst forth. "Fortune," writes he in his magniloquent way, "Fortune, which sways so imperiously the affairs of war, demonstrated throughout the operation its supreme control.* Nothing was omitted on the part of the Americans, to give to the expedition the desired termination; but the very bright prospects which for a time presented themselves, were suddenly overcast;—the capricious goddess gave us Pyle and saved Tarleton."

The re-appearance of Greene and his army in North Carolina, heralded by the scourings of Lee and Pickens, disconcerted the schemes of Lord Cornwallis. The recruiting service was interrupted. Many royalists who were on the way to his camp returned home. Forage and provisions became scarce in the neighborhood. He found himself, he said, "amongst timid friends and adjoining to inveterate rebels." On the 26th, therefore, he abandoned Hillsborough, threw himself across the Haw, and encamped near Alamance Creek, one of its principal tributaries, in a country favorable to supplies and with a tory population. His position was commanding, at the point of concurrence of roads from Salisbury, Guilford, High Rockford, Cross Creek, and Hillsborough. It covered also the communication with Wilmington, where a dépôt of military stores, so important to his half-destitute army, had recently been established.

* Lee's Memoirs of the War, i, 319.

Greene, with his main army, took post about fifteen miles above him, on the heights between Troublesome Creek and Reedy Fork, one of the tributaries of the Haw. His plan was to cut the enemy off from the upper counties; to harass him by skirmishes, but to avoid a general battle; thus gaining time for the arrival of reinforcements daily expected. He rarely lay more than two days in a place, and kept his light troops under Pickens and Williams between him and the enemy; hovering about the latter; intercepting his intelligence; attacking his foraging parties, and striking at his flanks whenever exposed. Sharp skirmishes occurred between them and Tarleton's cavalry with various success. The country being much of a wilderness, obliged both parties to be on the alert; but the Americans, accustomed to bush-fighting, were not easily surprised.

On the 6th of March, Cornwallis, learning that the light troops under Williams were very carelessly posted, put his army suddenly in motion, and crossed the Alamance in a thick fog; with the design to beat up their quarters, drive them in upon the main army, and bring Greene to action should he come to their assistance. His movement was discovered by the American patrols, and the alarm given. Williams hastily called in his detachments, and retreated with his light troops across Reedy Fork, while Lee with his legion manœuvred in front of the enemy. A stand was made by the Americans at Wetzell's Mill, but they were obliged to retire with the loss of fifty killed and wounded. Cornwallis did not pursue; evening was approaching, and he had failed in his main object; that of bringing Greene to action. The latter, fixed in his resolve of avoiding a conflict, had retreated across the Haw, in order to keep up his communication with the roads by which he expected his supplies and reinforce-

ments. The militia of the country, who occasionally flocked to his camp, were chiefly volunteers, who fell off after every skirmish, "going home," as he said, "to tell the news." "At this time," said he on the 10th, "I have not above eight or nine hundred of them in the field; yet there have been upwards of five thousand in motion in the course of four weeks. A force fluctuating in this manner can promise but slender hopes of success against an enemy in high discipline, and made formidable by the superiority of their numbers. Hitherto, I have been obliged to effect that by finesse which I dare not attempt by force." *

Greene had scarcely written this letter when the long-expected reinforcements arrived, having been hurried on by forced marches. They consisted of a brigade of Virginia militia, under General Lawson, two brigades of North Carolina militia, under Generals Butler and Eaton, and four hundred regulars, enlisted for eighteen months. His whole effective force, according to official returns, amounted to four thousand two hundred and forty-three foot, and one hundred and sixty-one cavalry. Of his infantry, not quite two thousand were regulars, and of these, three-fourths were new levies. His force nearly doubled in number that of Cornwallis, which did not exceed two thousand four hundred men; but many of Greene's troops were raw and inexperienced, and had never been in battle; those of the enemy were veterans, schooled in warfare, and, as it were, welded together by campaigning in a foreign land, where their main safety consisted in standing by each other.

Greene knew the inferiority of his troops in this respect; his reinforcements, too, fell far short of what he had been led to ex-

* Letter to Governor Jefferson, March 10.

pect, yet he determined to accept the battle which had so long been offered. The corps of light troops, under Williams, which had rendered such efficient service, was now incorporated with the main body, and all detachments were ordered to assemble at Guilford, within eight miles of the enemy, where he encamped on the 14th, sending his waggons and heavy baggage to the Iron Works at Troublesome Creek, ten miles in his rear.

Cornwallis, from the difficulty of getting correct information, and from Greene's frequent change of position, had an exaggerated idea of the American force, rating it as high as eight thousand men: still he trusted in his well-seasoned veterans, and determined to attack Greene in his encampment, now that he seemed disposed for a general action. To provide against the possibility of a retreat, he sent his carriages and baggage to Bell's Mills, on Deep River, and set out at daybreak on the 15th for Guilford.

Within four miles of that place, near the New Garden Meeting-house, Tarleton with the advanced guard of cavalry, infantry, and yagers, came upon the American advance-guard, composed of Lee's partisan legion, and some mountaineers and Virginia militia. Tarleton and Lee were well matched in military prowess, and the skirmish between them was severe. Lee's horses, being from Virginia and Pennsylvania, were superior in weight and strength to those of his opponent, which had been chiefly taken from plantations in South Carolina. The latter were borne down by a charge in close column; several of their riders were dismounted, and killed or taken prisoners. Tarleton, seeing that his weakly mounted men fought to a disadvantage, sounded a retreat; Lee endeavored to cut him off: a general conflict of the vanguards, horse and foot, ensued, when the

appearance of the main body of the enemy obliged Lee, in his turn, to retire with precipitation.

During this time, Greene was preparing for action on a woody eminence, a little more than a mile south of Guilford Court House. The neighboring country was covered with forest, excepting some cultivated fields about the court-house, and along the Salisbury road, which passed through the centre of the place, from south to north.

Greene had drawn out his troops in three lines. The first, composed of North Carolina militia, volunteers and riflemen, under Generals Butler and Eaton, was posted behind a fence, with an open field in front, and woods on the flanks and in the rear. About three hundred yards behind this, was the second line, composed of Virginia militia, under Generals Stevens and Lawson, drawn up across the road, and covered by a wood. The third line, about four hundred yards in the rear of the second, was composed of Continental troops or regulars; those of Virginia under General Huger on the right, those of Maryland under Colonel Williams on the left. Colonel Washington with a body of dragoons, Kirkwood's Delaware infantry, and a battalion of Virginia militia covered the right flank; Lee's legion, with the Virginia riflemen under Colonel Campbell, covered the left. Two six-pounders were in the road, in advance of the first line; two field-pieces with the rear-line near the court-house, where General Greene took his station.

About noon the head of the British army was descried advancing spiritedly from the south along the Salisbury road, and defiling into the fields. A cannonade was opened from the two six-pounders, in front of the first American line. It was answered by the British artillery. Neither produced much effect.

The enemy now advanced coolly and steadily in three columns; the Hessians and Highlanders under General Leslie, on the right, the Royal artillery and guards in the centre, and Webster's brigade on the left. The North Carolinians, who formed the first line, waited until the enemy were within one hundred and fifty yards, when, agitated by their martial array and undaunted movement, they began to fall into confusion; some fired off their pieces without taking aim; others threw them down, and took to flight. A volley from the foe, a shout, and a charge of the bayonet, completed their discomfiture. Some fled to the woods, others fell back upon the Virginians, who formed the second line. General Stevens, who commanded the latter, ordered his men to open and let the fugitives pass, pretending that they had orders to retire. He had taken care, however, to post forty riflemen in the rear of his own line, with orders to fire upon any one who should leave his post. Under his spirited command and example, the Virginians kept their ground and fought bravely.

The action became much broken up and diversified by the extent of the ground. The thickness of the woods impeded the movements of the cavalry. The reserves on both sides were called up. The British bayonet again succeeded; the second line gave way, and General Stevens, who had kept the field for some time, after being wounded in the thigh by a musket-ball, ordered a retreat.

The enemy pressed with increasing ardor against the third line, composed of Continental troops, and supported by Colonel Washington's dragoons and Kirkwood's Delawares. Greene counted on these to retrieve the day. They were regulars; they were fresh, and in perfect order. He rode along the line, calling on them to stand firm, and give the enemy a warm reception.

The first Maryland regiment which was on the right wing, was attacked by Colonel Webster, with the British left. It stood the shock bravely, and being seconded by some Virginia troops, and Kirkwood's Delawares, drove Webster across a ravine. The second Maryland regiment was not so successful. Impetuously attacked by Colonel Stewart, with a battalion of the guards, and a company of grenadiers, it faltered, gave way, and fled, abandoning two field-pieces, which were seized by the enemy. Stewart was pursuing, when the first regiment which had driven Webster across the ravine, came to the rescue with fixed bayonets, while Colonel Washington spurred up with his cavalry. The fight now was fierce and bloody. Stewart was slain; the two field-pieces were retaken, and the enemy in their turn gave way and were pursued with slaughter; a destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's artillery checked the pursuit. Two regiments approached on the right and left; Webster recrossed the ravine and fell upon Kirkwood's Delawares. There was intrepid fighting in different parts of the field; but Greene saw that the day was lost; there was no retrieving the effect produced by the first flight of the North Carolinians. Unwilling to risk the utter destruction of his army, he directed a retreat, which was made in good order, but they had to leave their artillery on the field, most of the horses having been killed. About three miles from the field of action he made a halt to collect stragglers, and then continued on to the place of rendezvous at Speedwell's Iron Works on Troublesome Creek.

The British were too much cut up and fatigued to follow up their victory. Two regiments with Tarleton's cavalry attempted a pursuit, but were called back. Efforts were made to collect the wounded of both armies, but they were dispersed over so wide a

space, among woods and thickets, that night closed before the task was accomplished. It was a dismal night even to the victors; a night of unusual darkness, with torrents of rain. The army was destitute of tents; there were not sufficient houses in the vicinity to receive the wounded; provisions were scanty; many had tasted very little food for the last two days; comforts were out of the question. Nearly fifty of the wounded sank under their aggravated miseries, and expired before morning. The cries of the disabled and dying, who remained on the field of battle, during the night, exceeded all description. Such a complicated scene of horror and distress, adds the British writer, whose words we quote, it is hoped, for the sake of humanity, rarely occurs, even in military life.*

The loss of the Americans in this hard-fought affair, was never fully ascertained. Their official returns, made immediately after the action, give little more than four hundred killed and wounded, and between eight and nine hundred missing; but Lord Cornwallis states in his despatches, that between two and three hundred of the Americans were found dead on the field of battle.

The loss sustained by his lordship, even if numerically less, was far more fatal; for, in the circumstances in which he was placed, it was not to be supplied, and it completely maimed him. Of his small army, ninety-three had fallen, four hundred and thirteen were wounded, and twenty-six missing. Among the killed and wounded were several officers of note. Thus, one-fourth of his army was either killed or disabled; his troops were exhausted by fatigue and hunger; his camp was encumbered by

* Stedman, vol. ii. p. 346.

the wounded. His victory, in fact, was almost as ruinous as a defeat.

Greene lay for two days within ten miles of him, near the Iron Works on Troublesome Creek, gathering up his scattered troops. He had imbibed the spirit of Washington, and remained undismayed by hardships or reverses. Writing to the latter, he says: "Lord Cornwallis will not give up this country, without being soundly beaten. I wish our force was more competent to the business. But I am in hopes, by little and little, to reduce him in time. His troops are good, well found, and fight with great obstinacy.

"Virginia," adds he, "has given me every support I could wish or expect, since Lord Cornwallis has been in North Carolina; and nothing has contributed more to this, than the prejudice of the people in favor of your Excellency, which has extended to me from the friendship you have been pleased to honor me with." *

And again: "The service here is extremely severe, and the officers and soldiers bear it with a degree of patience that does them the highest honor. I have never taken off my clothes since I left the Pedee. I was taken with a fainting last night, owing, I suppose, to excessive fatigue and constant watching. I am better to-day, but far from well.—I have little prospect of acquiring much reputation while I labor under so many disadvantages. I hope my friends will make full allowances; and as for vulgar opinion, I regard it not."

In Washington he had a friend whose approbation was dearer to him than the applause of thousands, and who knew how to

* Sparks. Correspondence of the Revolution, iii. 267.

appreciate him. To Greene's account of the battle he sent a cheering reply. "Although the honors of the field do not fall to your lot, I am convinced you deserve them. The chances of war are various, and the best concerted measures and most flattering prospects, may and often do deceive us, especially while we are in the power of the militia. The motives which induced you to risk an action with Lord Cornwallis are supported upon the best military principle, and the consequence, if you can prevent the dissipation of your troops, will no doubt be fortunate."

The consequence, it will be found, was such as Washington, with his usual sagacity, predicted. Cornwallis, so far from being able to advance in the career of victory, could not even hold the ground he had so bravely won, but was obliged to retreat from the scene of triumph, to some secure position where he might obtain supplies for his famished army.

Leaving, therefore, about seventy of his officers and men, who were too severely wounded to bear travelling, together with a number of wounded Americans, in the New Garden Meeting-house, and the adjacent buildings, under the protection of a flag of truce, and placing the rest of his wounded in waggons or on horseback, he set out, on the third day after the action, by easy marches, for Cross Creek, otherwise called the Haw, an eastern branch of Cape Fear River, where was a settlement of Scottish Highlanders, stout adherents, as he was led to believe, to the royal cause. Here he expected to be plentifully supplied with provisions, and to have his sick and wounded well taken care of. Hence, too, he could open a communication by Cape Fear River, with Wilmington, and obtain from the dépôt recently established there, such supplies as the country about Cross Creek did not afford.

On the day on which he began his march, he issued a proclamation, setting forth his victory, calling upon all loyal subjects to join his standard, and holding out the usual promises and threats to such as should obey or should continue in rebellion.

No sooner did Greene learn that Cornwallis was retreating, than he set out to follow him, determined to bring him again to action; and presenting the singular spectacle of the vanquished pursuing the victor. His troops, however, suffered greatly in this pursuit, from wintry weather, deep, wet, clayey roads, and scarcity of provisions; the country through which they marched being completely exhausted; but they harassed the enemy's rear-guard with frequent skirmishes.

On the 28th, Greene arrived at Ramsey's Mills, on Deep River, hard on the traces of Cornwallis, who had left the place a few hours previously, with such precipitation, that several of his wounded, who had died while on the march, were left behind unburied. Several fresh quarters of beef had likewise been forgotten, and were seized upon with eagerness by the hungry soldiery. Such had been the urgency of the pursuit this day, that many of the American troops sank upon the road exhausted with fatigue.

At Deep River, Greene was brought to a stand. Cornwallis had broken down the bridge by which he had crossed; and further pursuit for the present was impossible. The constancy of the militia now gave way. They had been continually on the march with little to eat, less to drink, and obliged to sleep in the woods in the midst of smoke. Every step had led them from their homes and increased their privations. They were now in want of every thing, for the retreating enemy left a famished country behind him. The term for which most of them had enlisted was expired, and they now demanded their discharge.

The demand was just and reasonable, and, after striving in vain to shake their determination, Greene felt compelled to comply with it. His force thus reduced, it would be impossible to pursue the enemy further. The halt he was obliged to make to collect provisions and rebuild the bridge, would give them such a start as to leave no hope of overtaking them should they continue their retreat; nor could he fight them upon equal terms should they make a stand. The regular troops would be late in the field, if raised at all: Virginia, from the unequal operation of the law for drafting, was not likely to furnish many soldiers: Maryland, as late as the 13th instant, had not got a man; neither was there the least prospect of raising a man in North Carolina. In this situation, remote from reinforcements, inferior to the enemy in numbers, and without hope of support, what was to be done? "If the enemy falls down toward Wilmington," said he, "they will be in a position where it would be impossible for us to injure them if we had a force."* Suddenly he determined to change his course, and carry the war into South Carolina. This would oblige the enemy either to follow him, and thus abandon North Carolina; or to sacrifice all his posts in the upper part of North Carolina and Georgia. To Washington, to whom he considered himself accountable for all his policy, and from whose counsel he derived confidence and strength, he writes on the present occasion. "All things considered, I think the movement is warranted by the soundest reasons, both political and military. The manœuvre will be critical and dangerous, and the troops exposed to every hardship. But as I share it with them, I may hope they will bear up under it with that magna-

* Greene to Washington. Cor. Rev. iii. 278.

nimity which has always supported them, and for which they deserve every thing of their country."—"I shall take every measure," adds he, "to avoid a misfortune. But necessity obliges me to commit myself to chance, and, I trust, my friends will do justice to my reputation, if any accident attends me."

In this brave spirit he apprised Sumter, Pickens, and Marion, by letter, of his intentions, and called upon them to be ready to co-operate with all the militia they could collect; promising to send forward cavalry and small detachments of light infantry, to aid them in capturing outposts before the army should arrive.

To Lafayette he writes at the same time. "I expect by this movement to draw Cornwallis out of this State, *and prevent him from forming a junction with Arnold.* If you follow to support me, it is not impossible that we may give him a drubbing, especially if General Wayne comes up with the Pennsylvanians."

In pursuance of his plan, Greene, on the 30th of March, discharged all his militia with many thanks for the courage and fortitude with which they had followed him through so many scenes of peril and hardship; and joyously did the poor fellows set out for their homes. Then, after giving his "little, distressed, though successful army," a short taste of the repose they needed, and having collected a few days' provision, he set forward on the 5th of April toward Camden, where Lord Rawdon had his head-quarters.

Cornwallis, in the mean time, was grievously disappointed in the hopes he had formed of obtaining ample provisions and forage at Cross Creek, and strong reinforcements from the royalists in that neighborhood. Neither could he open a communication by Cape Fear River, for the conveyance of his troops to Wilmington. The distance by water was upwards of a hundred miles, the

breadth of the river seldom above one hundred yards, the banks high, and the inhabitants on each side generally hostile. He was compelled, therefore, to continue his retreat by land, quite to Wilmington, where he arrived on the 7th of April, and his troops, weary, sick and wounded, rested for the present from the "unceasing toils and unspeakable hardships, which they had undergone during the past three months." *

It was his lordship's intention, as soon as he should have equipped his own corps and received a part of the expected reinforcements from Ireland, to return to the upper country, in hopes of giving protection to the royal interests in South Carolina, and of preserving the health of his troops until he should concert new measures with Sir Henry Clinton.† His plans were all disconcerted, however, by intelligence of Greene's rapid march toward Camden. Never, we are told, was his lordship more affected than by this news. "My situation here is very distressing," writes he. "Greene took the advantage of my being obliged to come to this place, and has marched to South Carolina. My expresses to Lord Rawdon on my leaving Cross Creek, warning him of the possibility of such a movement, have all failed; mountaineers and militia have poured into the back part of that province, and I much fear that Lord Rawdon's posts will be so distant from each other, and his troops so scattered, as to put him into the greatest danger of being beaten in detail, and that the worst of consequences may happen to most of the troops out of Charleston."

* See Letter of Cornwallis to Lord G. Germain, April 18. Also Ann. Register, 1781, p. 72.

† Answer to Clinton's Narrative, Introduction, p. vi.

‡ Letter to Major-General Phillips.

It was too late for his lordship to render any aid by a direct move towards Camden. Before he could arrive there, Greene would have made an attack; if successful, his lordship's army might be hemmed in among the great rivers, in an exhausted country, revolutionary in its spirit, where Greene might cut off their subsistence, and render their arms useless.

All thoughts of offensive operations against North Carolina were at an end. Sickness, desertion, and the loss sustained at Guilford Court-house, had reduced his little army to fourteen hundred and thirty-five men.

In this sad predicament, after remaining several days in a painful state of irresolution, he determined to take advantage of Greene's having left the back part of Virginia open, to march directly into that province, and attempt a junction with the force acting there under General Phillips.

By this move, he might draw Greene back to the northward, and by the reduction of Virginia, he might promote the subjugation of the South. The move, however, he felt to be perilous. His troops were worn down by upwards of eight hundred miles of marching and counter-marching, through an inhospitable and impracticable country; they had now three hundred more before them; under still worse circumstances than those in which they first set out; for, so destitute were they, notwithstanding the supplies received at Wilmington, that his lordship, sadly humorous, declared, "his cavalry wanted every thing, and his infantry, every thing but shoes." *

There was no time for hesitation or delay; Greene might return and render the junction with Phillips impracticable: hav-

* Annual Register, 1781, p. 90.

ing sent an express to the latter, therefore, informing him of his coming, and appointing a meeting at Petersburg, his lordship set off on the 25th of April, on his fated march into Virginia.

We must now step back in dates to bring up events in the more northern parts of the Union.

CHAPTER XXI.

ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH IN VIRGINIA—EXPEDITIONS SENT AGAINST HIM—INSTRUCTIONS TO LAFAYETTE—WASHINGTON AT NEWPORT—CONSULTATIONS WITH DE ROCHAMBEAU—SAILING OF THE FRENCH FLEET—PURSUED BY THE ENGLISH—EXPEDITION OF LAFAYETTE TO VIRGINIA—ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH FLEETS—FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION AGAINST ARNOLD—LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO COLONEL LAURENS—MEASURES TO REINFORCE GREENE—GENERAL PHILLIPS IN COMMAND AT PORTSMOUTH—MARAUDS THE COUNTRY—CHECKED BY LAFAYETTE—MOUNT VERNON MENACED—DEATH OF PHILLIPS.

In a former chapter we left Benedict Arnold fortifying himself at Portsmouth, after his ravaging incursion. At the solicitation of Governor Jefferson, backed by Congress, the Chevalier de la Luzerne had requested the French commander at the eastward to send a ship of the line and some frigates to Chesapeake Bay to oppose the traitor. Fortunately, at this juncture a severe snow-storm (Jan. 22d) scattered Arbuthnot's blockading squadron, wrecking one ship of the line and dismasting others, and enabled the French fleet at Newport to look abroad; and Rochambeau wrote to Washington that the Chevalier Destouches, who commanded the fleet, proposed to send three or four ships to the Chesapeake.

Washington feared the position of Arnold, and his well-known address, might enable him to withstand a mere attack by

sea; anxious to ensure his capture, he advised that Destouches should send his whole fleet; and that De Rochambeau should embark about a thousand men on board of it, with artillery and apparatus for a siege; engaging, on his own part, to send off immediately a detachment of twelve hundred men to co-operate. "The destruction of the corps under the command of Arnold," writes he, "is of such immense importance to the welfare of the Southern States, that I have resolved to attempt it with the detachment I now send in conjunction with the militia, even if it should not be convenient for your Excellency to detach a part of your force; provided M. Destouches is able to protect our operations by such a disposition of his fleet as will give us the command of the bay, and prevent succors from being sent from New York."

Before the receipt of this letter, the French commanders, acting on their first impulse, had, about the 9th of February, detached M. de Tilly, with a sixty-gun ship and two frigates, to make a dash into the Chesapeake. Washington was apprised of their sailing just as he was preparing to send off the twelve hundred men spoken of in his letter to De Rochambeau. He gave the command of this detachment to Lafayette, instructing him to act in conjunction with the militia and the ships sent by Destouches, against the enemy's corps actually in Virginia. As the case was urgent, he was to suffer no delay, when on the march, for want either of provisions, forage, or waggons, but where ordinary means did not suffice, he was to resort to military impress. "You are to do no act whatever with Arnold," said the letter of instruction, "that directly or by implication may screen him from the punishment due to his treason and desertion, which, if he

should fall into your hands, you will execute in the most summary manner."

Washington wrote at the same time to the Baron Steuben, informing him of the arrangements, and requesting him to be on the alert. "If the fleet should have arrived before this gets to hand," said he, "secrecy will be out of the question; if not, you will conceal your expectations, and only seem to be preparing for defence. Arnold, on the appearance of the fleet, may endeavor to retreat through North Carolina. If you take any measure to obviate this, the precaution will be advisable. Should you be able to capture this detachment with its chief, it will be an event as pleasing as it will be useful."

Lafayette set out on his march on the 22d of February, and Washington was indulging the hope that, scanty as was the naval force sent to the Chesapeake, the combined enterprise might be successful, when, on the 27th, he received a letter from the Count de Rochambeau announcing its failure. De Tilly had made his dash into Chesapeake Bay, but Arnold had been apprised by the British Admiral Arbuthnot of his approach, and had drawn his ships high up Elizabeth River. The water was too shallow for the largest French ships to get within four leagues of him. One of De Tilly's frigates ran aground, and was got off with difficulty, and that commander, seeing that Arnold was out of his reach, and fearing to be himself blockaded should he linger, put to sea and returned to Newport; having captured during his cruise a British frigate of forty-four guns, and two privateers with their prizes.

The French commanders now determined to follow the plan suggested by Washington, and operate in the Chesapeake with their whole fleet and a detachment of land troops, being, as they

said, disposed to risk every thing to hinder Arnold from establishing himself at Portsmouth.

Washington set out for Newport to concert operations with tne French commmanders. Before his departure, he wrote to Lafayette, on the 1st of March, giving him intelligence of these intentions, and desiring him to transmit it to the Baron Steuben. "I have received a letter," adds he, "from General Greene, by which it appears that Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men, was penetrating the country with very great rapidity, and Greene with a much inferior force retiring before him, having determined to pass the Roanoke. This intelligence, and an apprehension that Arnold may make his escape before the fleet can arrive in the bay, induces me to give you greater latitude than you had in your original instructions. You are at liberty to concert a plan with the French general and naval commander for a descent into North Carolina, to cut off the detachment of the enemy which had ascended Cape Fear River, intercept, if possible, Cornwallis, and relieve General Greene and the Southern States. This, however, ought to be a secondary object, attempted in case of Arnold's retreat to New York; or in case his reduction should be attended with too much delay. There should be strong reasons to induce a change of our first plan against Arnold if he is still in Virginia.

Washington arrived at Newport on the 6th of March, and found the French fleet ready for sea, the troops eleven hundred strong, commanded by General the Baron de Viomenil, being already embarked.

Washington went immediately on board of the admiral's ship, where he had an interview with the Count de Rochambeau, and arranged the plan of the campaign. Returning on shore he was

received by the inhabitants with enthusiastic demonstrations of affection; and was gratified to perceive the harmony and good will between them and the French army and fleet. Much of this he attributed to the wisdom of the commanders, and the discipline of the troops, but more to magnanimity on the one part, and gratitude on the other; and he hailed it as a happy presage of lasting friendship between the two nations.

On the 8th of March, at ten o'clock at night, he writes to Lafayette: "I have the pleasure to inform you that the whole fleet went out with a fair wind this evening about sunset. We have not heard of any move of the British in Gardiner's Bay. Should we luckily meet with no interruption from them, and Arnold should continue in Virginia, until the arrival of M. Destouches, I flatter myself you will meet with that success which I most ardently wish, not only on the public, but your own account."

The British fleet made sail in pursuit, on the morning of the 10th; as the French had so much the start, it was hoped they would reach Chesapeake Bay before them. Washington felt the present to be a most important moment. "The success of the expedition now in agitation," said he, "seems to depend upon a naval superiority, and the force of the two fleets is so equal, that we must rather hope for, than entertain an assurance of victory. The attempt, however, made by our allies to dislodge the enemy in Virginia, is a bold one, and should it fail, will nevertheless entitle them to the thanks of the public."

On returning to his head-quarters at New Windsor, Washington on the 20th of March found letters from General Greene, informing him that he had saved all his baggage, artillery, and stores, notwithstanding the hot pursuit of the enemy, and was

now in his turn following them, but that he was greatly in need of reinforcements.

"My regard for the public good, and my inclination to promote your success," writes Washington in reply, "will prompt me to give every assistance, and to make every diversion in your favor. But what can I do if I am not furnished with the means? From what I saw and learned while at the eastward, I am convinced the levies will be late in the field, and I fear far short of the requisition. I most anxiously wait the event of the present operation in Virginia. If attended with success, it may have the happiest influence on our southern affairs, by leaving the forces of Virginia free to act. For while there is an enemy in the heart of a country, you can expect neither men nor supplies from it, in that full and regular manner in which they ought to be given."

In the mean time, Lafayette with his detachment was pressing forward by forced marches for Virginia. Arriving at the Head of Elk on the 3d of March, he halted until he should receive tidings respecting the French fleet. A letter from the Baron Steuben spoke of the preparations he was making, and the facility of taking the fortifications of Portsmouth, "sword in hand." The youthful marquis was not so sanguine as the veteran baron. "Arnold," said he, "has had so much time to prepare, and plays so deep a game; nature has made the position so respectable, and some of the troops under his orders have been in so many actions, that I do not flatter myself to succeed so easily." On the 7th he received Washington's letter of the 1st, apprising him of the approaching departure of the whole fleet with land forces. Lafayette now conducted his troops by water to Annapolis, and concluding, from the time the ships were to sail, and the winds which had since prevailed, the French fleet must be

already in the Chesapeake, he crossed the bay in an open boat to Virginia, and pushed on to confer with the American and French commanders; get a convoy for his troops, and concert matters for a vigorous co-operation. Arriving at York on the 14th, he found the Baron Steuben in the bustle of military preparations, and confident of having five thousand militia ready to co-operate. These, with Lafayette's detachment, would be sufficient for the attack by land; nothing was wanting but a co-operation by sea; and the French fleet had not yet appeared, though double the time necessary for the voyage had elapsed. The marquis repaired to General Muhlenburg's camp near Suffolk, and reconnoitred with him the enemy's works at Portsmouth; this brought on a trifling skirmish, but every thing appeared satisfactory; every thing promised complete success.

On the 20th, word was brought that a fleet had come to anchor within the capes. It was supposed of course to be the French, and now the capture of the traitor was certain. He himself from certain signs appeared to be in great confusion; none of his ships ventured down the bay. An officer of the French navy bore down to visit the fleet, but returned with the astounding intelligence that it was British!

Admiral Arbuthnot had in fact overtaken Destouches on the 16th of March, off the capes of Virginia. Their forces were nearly equal; eight ships of the line, and four frigates on each side, the French having more men, the English more guns. An engagement took place which lasted about an hour. The British van at first took the brunt of the action, and was severely handled; the centre came up to its relief. The French line was broken and gave way, but rallied, and formed again at some distance. The crippled state of some of his ships prevented the

British admiral from bringing on a second encounter; nor did the French seek one, but shaped their course the next day back to Newport. Both sides claimed a victory. The British certainly effected the main objects they had in view; the French were cut off from the Chesapeake; the combined enterprise against Portsmouth was disconcerted, and Arnold was saved. Great must have been the apprehensions of the traitor, while that enterprise threatened to entrap him. He knew the peculiar peril impending over him; it had been announced in the sturdy reply of an American prisoner, to his inquiry what his countrymen would do to him if he were captured.—"They would cut off the leg wounded in the service of your country and bury it with the honors of war; the rest of you they would hang!"

The feelings of Washington, on hearing of the result of the enterprise, may be judged from the following passage of a letter to Colonel John Laurens, then minister at Paris. "The failure of this expedition, which was most flattering in the commencement, is much to be regretted; because a successful blow in that quarter would, in all probability, have given a decisive turn to our affairs in all the Southern States; because it has been attended with considerable expense on our part, and much inconvenience to the State of Virginia, by the assembling of our militia; because the world is disappointed at not seeing Arnold in gibbets; and above all, because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat till the result of your mission is known; for be assured, my dear Laurens, day does not follow night more certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war, without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of

the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased, and in readiness for another. * * * * * * If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; and you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed, to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. * * * In a word, we are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come. * * * How easy would it be to retort the enemy's own game upon them; if it could be made to comport with the general plan of the war, to keep a superior fleet always in these seas, and France would put us in condition to be active, by advancing us money. The ruin of the enemy's schemes would then be certain; the bold game they are now playing would be the means of effecting it; for they would be reduced to the necessity of concentrating their force at capital points; thereby giving up all the advantages they have gained in the Southern States, or be vulnerable every where."

Washington's anxiety was now awakened for the safety of General Greene. Two thousand troops had sailed from New York under General Phillips, probably to join with the force under Arnold, and proceed to reinforce Cornwallis. Should they form a junction, Greene would be unable to withstand them. With these considerations Washington wrote to Lafayette, urging him, since he was already three hundred miles, which was half

the distance, on the way, to push on with all possible speed to join the southern army, sending expresses ahead to inform Greene of his approach.

The letter found Lafayette on the 8th of April, at the Head of Elk, preparing to march back with his troops to the banks of the Hudson. On his return through Virginia, he had gone out of his way, and travelled all night for the purpose of seeing Washington's mother at Fredericksburg, and paying a visit to Mount Vernon. He now stood ready to obey Washington's orders, and march to reinforce General Greene; but his troops, who were chiefly from the Eastern States, murmured at the prospect of a campaign in a southern climate, and desertions began to occur. Upon this he announced in general orders, that he was about to enter on an enterprise of great difficulty and danger, in which he trusted his soldiers would not abandon him. Any, however, who were unwilling, should receive permits to return home.

As he had anticipated, their pride was roused by this appeal. All engaged to continue forward. So great was the fear of appearing a laggard, or a craven, that a sergeant, too lame to march, hired a place in a cart to keep up with the army. In the zeal of the moment, Lafayette borrowed money on his own credit from the Baltimore merchants, to purchase summer clothing for his troops, in which he was aided, too, by the ladies of the city, with whom he was deservedly popular.

The detachment from New York, under General Phillips, arrived at Portsmouth on the 26th of March. That officer immediately took command, greatly to the satisfaction of the British officers, who had been acting under Arnold. The force now collected there amounted to three thousand five hundred men. The

garrison of New York had been greatly weakened in furnishing this detachment, but Cornwallis had urged the policy of transferring the seat of war to Virginia, even at the expense of abandoning New York; declaring that until that State was subdued, the British hold upon the Carolinas must be difficult, if not precarious.

The disparity in force was now so great, that the Baron Steuben had to withdraw his troops, and remove the military stores into the interior. Many of the militia, too, their term of three months being expired, stacked their arms, and set off for their homes, and most of the residue had to be discharged.

General Phillips had hitherto remained quiet in Portsmouth, completing the fortifications, but evidently making preparations for an expedition. On the 16th of April, he left one thousand men in garrison, and, embarking the rest in small vessels of light draught, proceeded up James River, destroying armed vessels, public magazines, and a ship-yard belonging to the State.

Landing at City Point, he advanced against Petersburg, a place of deposit of military stores and tobacco. He was met about a mile below the town by about one thousand militia, under General Muhlenburg, who, after disputing the ground inch by inch for nearly two hours, with considerable loss on both sides, retreated across the Appomattox, breaking down the bridge behind them.

Phillips entered the town, set fire to the tobacco warehouses, and destroyed all the vessels lying in the river. Repairing and crossing the bridge over the Appomattox, he proceeded to Chesterfield Court-house, where he destroyed barracks and public stores; while Arnold, with a detachment, laid waste the magazines of tobacco in the direction of Warwick. A fire was opened

by the latter from a few field-pieces on the river bank, upon a squadron of small, armed vessels, which had been intended to co-operate with the French fleet against Portsmouth. The crews scuttled or set fire to them, and escaped to the north side of the river.

This destructive course was pursued until they arrived at Manchester, a small place opposite Richmond, where the tobacco warehouses were immediately in a blaze. Richmond was a leading object of this desolating enterprise, for there a great part of the military stores of the State had been collected. Fortunately, Lafayette, with his detachment of two thousand men, had arrived there, by forced marches, the evening before, and being joined by about two thousand militia and sixty dragoons (the latter, principally young Virginians of family), had posted himself strongly on the high banks on the north side of the river.

There being no bridge across the river at that time, General Phillips did not think it prudent to attempt a passage in face of such a force so posted; but was extremely irritated at being thus foiled by the celerity of his youthful opponent, who now assumed the chief command of the American forces in Virginia.

Returning down the south bank of the river, to the place where his vessels awaited him, General Phillips re-embarked on the 2d of May, and dropped slowly down the river below the confluence of the Chickahomony. He was followed cautiously, and his movements watched by Lafayette, who posted himself behind the last-named river.

Despatches from Cornwallis now informed Phillips that his lordship was advancing with all speed from the South to effect a junction with him. The general immediately made a rapid move to regain possession of Petersburg, where the junction was to

take place. Lafayette attempted by forced marches to get there before him, but was too late. Falling back, therefore, he re-crossed James River and stationed himself some miles below Richmond, to be at hand for the protection of the public stores collected there.

During this main expedition of Phillips, some of his smaller vessels had carried on the plan of plunder and devastation in other of the rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay; setting fire to the houses where they met with resistance. One had ascended the Potomac and menaced Mount Vernon. Lund Washington, who had charge of the estate, met the flag which the enemy sent on shore, and saved the property from ravage, by furnishing the vessel with provisions. Lafayette, who heard of the circumstance, and was sensitive for the honor of Washington, immediately wrote to him on the subject. "This conduct of the person who represents you on your estate," writes he, "must certainly produce a bad effect, and contrast with the courageous replies of some of your neighbors, whose houses in consequence have been burnt. You will do what you think proper, my dear general, but friendship makes it my duty to give you confidentially the facts."

Washington, however, had previously received a letter from Lund himself, stating all the circumstances of the case, and had immediately written him a reply. He had no doubt that Lund had acted from his best judgment, and with a view to preserve the property and buildings from impending danger, but he was stung to the quick by the idea that his agent should go on board of the enemy's vessels, carry them refreshments, and "commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels," as he termed them. "It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard," writes

he, "that in consequence of your noncompliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

In concluding his letter, he expresses his opinion that it was the intention of the enemy to prosecute the plundering plan they had begun; and that it would end in the destruction of his property, but adds, that he is "prepared for the event." He advises his agent to deposit the most valuable and least bulky articles in a place of safety. "Such and so many things as are necessary for common and present use must be retained, and must run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer."

Such were the steadfast purposes of Washington's mind when war was brought home to his door, and threatening his earthly paradise of Mount Vernon.

In the mean time the desolating career of General Phillips was brought to a close. He had been ill for some days previous to his arrival at Petersburg, and by the time he reached there, was no longer capable of giving orders. He died four days afterwards; honored and deeply regretted by his brothers in arms, as a meritorious and well-tried soldier. What made his death to be more sensibly felt by them at this moment, was, that it put the traitor, Arnold, once more in the general command.

He held it, however, but for a short time, as Lord Cornwallis arrived at Petersburg on the 20th of May, after nearly a month's weary marching from Wilmington. His lordship, on taking command, found his force augmented by a considerable detachment of royal artillery, two battalions of light infantry, the 76th

and 80th British regiments, a Hessian regiment, Lieutenant-colonel Simcoe's corps of Queen's rangers, cavalry and infantry, one hundred yagers, Arnold's legion of royalists, and the garrison of Portsmouth. He was cheered also by intelligence that Lord Rawdon had obtained an advantage over General Greene before Camden, and that three British regiments had sailed from Cork for Charleston. His mind, we are told, was now set at ease with regard to Southern affairs; his spirits, so long jaded by his harassing tramps about the Carolinas, were again lifted up by his augmented strength, and Tarleton assures us, that his lordship indulged in "brilliant hopes of a glorious campaign in those parts of America where he commanded." * How far these hopes were realized, we shall show in a future page.

* Tarleton. History of the Campaign, p. 291.

CHAPTER XXII.

INEFFICIENT STATE OF THE ARMY—MARAUD OF DELANCEY—DEATH OF COLONEL GREENE—ARRIVAL OF THE COUNT DE BARRAS—FRENCH NAVAL FORCE EXPECTED—INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU AT WEATHERSFIELD—PLAN OF COMBINED OPERATIONS—FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT OF ROBERT MORRIS—SCHEME TO ATTACK THE WORKS ON NEW YORK ISLAND AND CAPTURE DELANCEY'S CORPS—ENCAMPMENTS OF AMERICAN AND FRENCH ARMIES IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY—RECONNOITRING EXPEDITIONS.

While affairs were approaching a crisis in Virginia, troubles were threatening from the North. There were rumors of invasion from Canada; of war councils and leagues among the savage tribes; of a revival of the territorial feuds between New York and Vermont. Such, however, was the deplorable inefficiency of the military system, that though, according to the resolves of Congress, there were to have been thirty-seven thousand men under arms at the beginning of the year, Washington's whole force on the Hudson in the month of May did not amount to seven thousand men, of whom little more than four thousand were effective.

He still had his head-quarters at New Windsor, just above the Highlands, and within a few miles of West Point. Here he received intelligence that the enemy were in force on the opposite side of the Hudson, marauding the country on the north side of

Croton River, and he ordered a hasty advance of Connecticut troops in that direction.

The Croton River flows from east to west across Westchester County, and formed as it were the barrier of the American lines. The advanced posts of Washington's army guarded it, and by its aid, protected the upper country from the incursions of those foraging parties, and marauders which had desolated the neutral ground below it. The incursions most to be guarded against were those of Colonel Delancey's loyalists, a horde of tories and refugees which had their stronghold in Morrisania, and were the terror of the neighboring country. There was a petty war continually going on between them and the American outposts, often of a ruthless kind. Delancey's horse and Delancey's rangers scoured the country, and swept off forage and cattle from its fertile valleys for the British army at New York. Hence they were sometimes stigmatized by the opprobrious appellation of Cow Boys.

The object of their present incursion was to surprise an outpost of the American army stationed near a fordable part of the Croton River, not far from Pine's Bridge. The post was commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene, of Rhode Island, the same who had successfully defended Fort Mercer on the Delaware, when assailed by Count Donop. He was a valuable officer, highly prized by Washington. The enterprise against his post was something like that against the post of Young's House; both had been checks to the foragers of this harassed region.

Colonel Delancey, who led this foray, was successor to the unfortunate André as Adjutant-general of the British army. He conducted it secretly, and in the night, at the head of a hundred horse and two hundred foot. The Croton was forded at daybreak, just as the night-guard had been withdrawn, and the farm

houses were surprised and assailed in which the Americans were quartered. That occupied by Colonel Greene and a brother officer, Major Flagg, was first surrounded. The major started from his bed, and discharged his pistols from a window, but was shot through the head, and afterwards despatched by cuts and thrusts of the sabre.

The door of Greene's room was burst open. He defended himself vigorously and effectively with his sword, for he had great strength, but he was overpowered by numbers, cut down, and barbarously mangled. A massacre was going on in other quarters. Besides these two officers, there were between thirty and forty killed and wounded, and several made prisoners.

It is said that Colonel Delancey was not present at the carnage, but remained on the south side of the Croton to secure the retreat of his party. It may be so; but the present exploit was in the spirit of others by which he had contributed to harry this beautiful region, and made it a "bloody ground." No foes so ruthless had the American patriots to encounter as their own tory countrymen in arms.

Before the troops ordered out by Washington arrived at the post, the marauders had made a precipitate retreat. They had attempted to carry off Greene a prisoner, but he died within three quarters of a mile of the house. His captors, as they passed by the farm houses, told the inhabitants that, should there be any inquiry after the colonel, they had left him dead at the edge of the woods.*

Greene was but forty-four years of age at the time of his death, and was a model of manly strength and comeliness. A

* Letter of Paymaster Hughes. See Bolton's Westchester Co. vol. ii p. 94.

true soldier of the Revolution, he had served at Lexington and Bunker's Hill; followed Arnold through the Kennebec wilderness to Quebec; fought under the walls of that city; distinguished himself by his defence of Fort Mercer on the Delaware, and by his kind treatment of his vanquished and wounded antagonist, Colonel Donop. How different the treatment experienced by him at the hands of his tory countrymen!

The commander-in-chief, we are told, heard with anguish and indignation the tragical fate of this his faithful friend and soldier. On the subsequent day, the corpse of Colonel Greene was brought to head-quarters, and his funeral solemnized with military honors and universal grief.*

At this juncture, Washington's attention was called in another direction. A frigate had arrived at Boston, bringing the Count de Barras, to take command of the French naval force. He was a veteran about sixty years of age, and had commanded D'Estaing's vanguard, when he forced the entrance of Newport harbor. The count brought the cheering intelligence, that an armament of twenty ships of the line, with land forces, was to sail, or had sailed, from France, under the Count de Grasse for the West Indies, and that twelve of these ships were to relieve the squadron at Newport, and might be expected on the coast of the United States in July or August.

The Count de Rochambeau, having received despatches from the court of France, now requested an interview with Washington. The latter appointed Weathersfield in Connecticut for the purpose; and met the count there on the 22d of May, hoping to settle a definitive plan of the campaign. Both as yet were ignorant of the arrival of Cornwallis in Virginia. The policy of a

* Lee's Memoirs of the War, vol. i. p. 407.

joint expedition to relieve the Carolinas was discussed. As the French ships in Newport were still blockaded by a superior force, such an expedition would have to be made by land. A march to the Southern States was long and harassing, and always attended with a great waste of life. Such would certainly be the case at present, when it would have to be made in the heat of summer. The difficulties and expenses of land transportation, also, presented a formidable objection.

On the other hand, an effective blow might be struck at New York, the garrison having been reduced one-half by detachments to the South. That important post and its dependencies might be wrested from the enemy, or, if not, they might be obliged to recall a part of their force from the South for their own defence.

It was determined, therefore, that the French troops should march from Newport as soon as possible, and form a junction with the American army on the Hudson, and that both should move down to the vicinity of New York to make a combined attack, in which the Count de Grasse should be invited to cooperate with his fleet and a body of land troops.

A vessel was despatched by De Rochambeau, to inform the Count de Grasse of this arrangement; and letters were addressed by Washington to the executive authorities of New Jersey and the New England States, urging them to fill up their battalions and furnish their quotas of provisions. Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, when he mustered his forces at Peekskill, he was mortified to find not more than five thousand effective men. Notwithstanding, too, all the resolutions passed in the legislatures of the various States for supplying the army, it would, at this critical moment, have been destitute of provisions, especially

bread, had it not been for the zeal, talents, and activity of Mr. Robert Morris, now a delegate to Congress, from the State of Pennsylvania, and recently appointed superintendent of finance. This patriotic and energetic man, when public means failed, pledged his own credit in transporting military stores and feeding the army. Throughout the Revolution, Washington was continually baffled in the hopes caused by the resolutions of legislative bodies, too often as little alimentary as the east wind.

The Count de Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun being arrived with their troops in Connecticut, on their way to join the American army, Washington prepared for spirited operations; quickened by the intelligence that a part of the garrison of New York had been detached to forage the Jerseys. Two objects were contemplated by him: one, the surprisal of the British works at the north end of New York Island; the other the capture or destruction of Delancey's corps of refugees in Morrisania. The attack upon the posts was to be conducted by General Lincoln, with a detachment from the main army, which he was to bring down by water—that on Delancey's corps by the Duke de Lauzun with his legion, aided by Sheldon's dragoons, and a body of Connecticut troops. Both operations were to be carried into effect on the 3d of July. The duke was to march down from Ridgebury in Connecticut, for the purpose. Every thing was to be conducted with secrecy and by the way of surprisal. Should any thing occur to prevent Lincoln from attempting the works on New York Island, he was to land his men above Spyt den Duivel Creek, march to the high grounds in front of King's Bridge, lie concealed there until the duke's attack on Delancey's corps should be announced by firing or other means; then to dispose

of his force in such manner as to make the enemy think it larger than it really was; thereby deterring troops from coming over the bridge to turn Lauzun's right, while he prevented the escape over the bridge of Delancey's refugees when routed from Morrisania.

Washington, at the same time, wrote a confidential letter to Governor Clinton, informing him of designs upon the enemy's posts. "Should we be happy enough to succeed," writes he, "and be able to hold our conquest, the advantages will be greater than can well be imagined. But I cannot flatter myself that the enemy will permit the latter, unless I am suddenly and considerably reinforced. I shall march down the remainder of this army, and I have hopes that the French force will be near at hand at the time. But I shall, notwithstanding, direct the alarm-guns and beacons to be fired in case of success; and I have to request, that your Excellency will, upon such signals, communicate the meaning of them to the militia, and put yourself at the head of them, and march with the utmost expedition to King's Bridge, bringing with you three or four days' provision at least."

It was a service which would have been exactly to the humor of George Clinton.

In pursuance of the plan, Lincoln left the camp near Peekskill on the 1st, with eight hundred men, and artillery, and proceeded to Teller's Point, where they were embarked in boats with muffled oars, and rowed silently at night down the Tappan Sea, that region of mystery and secret enterprise. At daylight they kept concealed under the land. The Duke de Lauzun was supposed, at the same time, to be on the way from Connecticut. Washington, at three o'clock on the morning of the 2d, left his tents standing at Peekskill, and commenced his march with his main

force, without baggage; making a brief halt at Croton Bridge, about nine miles from Peekskill; another at the Sleepy Hollow Church, near Tarrytown, where he halted until dusk, and completed the rest of his march in the night, to Valentine's Hill, four miles above King's Bridge, where he arrived about sunrise. There he posted himself to cover the detached troops, and improve any advantages that might be gained by them.

Lincoln, on the morning of the 2d, had left his flotilla concealed under the eastern shore, and crossed to Fort Lee to reconnoitre Fort Washington from the cliffs on the opposite side of the Hudson. To his surprise and chagrin, he discovered a British force encamped on the north end of New York Island, and a ship-of-war anchored in the river. In fact, the troops which had been detached into the Jerseys, had returned, and the enemy were on the alert; the surprisal of the forts, therefore, was out of the question.

Lincoln's thoughts now were to aid the Duke de Lauzun's part of the scheme, as he had been instructed. Before daylight of the 3d, he landed his troops above Spyt den Duivel Creek, and took possession of the high ground on the north of Harlem River, where Fort Independence once stood. Here he was discovered by a foraging party of the enemy, fifteen hundred strong, who had sallied out at daybreak to scour the country. An irregular skirmish ensued. The firing was heard by the Duke de Lauzun, who was just arrived with his troops at East Chester, fatigued by a long and forced march in sultry weather. Finding the country alarmed, and all hope of surprising Delancey's corps at an end, he hastened to the support of Lincoln. Washington also advanced with his troops from Valentine's Hill. The British, perceiving their danger, retreated to their boats on the east side of

Harlem River, and crossed over to New York Island. A trifling loss in killed and wounded had been sustained on each side, and Lincoln had made a few prisoners.

Being disappointed in both objects, Washington did not care to fatigue his troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, and spent a good part of the day reconnoitring the enemy's works. In the afternoon he retired to Valentine's Hill, and the next day marched to Dobbs Ferry, where he was joined by the Count de Rochambeau on the 6th of July. The two armies now encamped; the American in two lines, resting on the Hudson at Dobbs Ferry, where it was covered by batteries, and extending eastward toward the Neperan or Sawmill River; the French in a single line on the hills further east, reaching to the Bronx River. The beautiful valley of the Neperan intervened between the encampments. It was a lovely country for a summer encampment, breezy hills commanding wide prospects; umbrageous valleys watered by bright pastoral streams, the Bronx, the Spraine, and the Neperan, and abounding with never-failing springs. The French encampment made a gallant display along the Greenburgh hills. Some of the officers, young men of rank, to whom this was all a service of romance, took a pride in decorating their tents, and forming little gardens in their vicinity. "We have a charming position among rocks and under magnificent tulip trees;" writes one of them, the Count Dumas. General Washington was an object of their enthusiasm. He visited the tents they had so gayly embellished; for, with all his gravity, he was fond of the company of young men. They were apprised of his coming, and set out on their camp-tables plans of the battle of Trenton; of West Point, and other scenes connected with the war. The greatest harmony prevailed between the armies.

The two commanders had their respective head-quarters in farm-houses, and occasionally, on festive occasions, long tables were spread in the adjacent barns, which were converted into banqueting halls. The young French officers gained the good graces of the country belles, though little acquainted with their language. Their encampment was particularly gay, and it was the boast of an old lady of the neighborhood many years after the war, that she had danced at head-quarters when a girl with the celebrated Marshal Berthier, at that time one of the aides-de-camp of the Count de Rochambeau.*

The two armies lay thus encamped for three or four weeks. In the mean time letters urged Washington's presence in Virginia. Richard Henry Lee advised that he should come with two or three thousand good troops, and be clothed with dictatorial powers. "There is nothing, I think, more certain," writes Lee, "than that your personal call would bring into immediate exertion the force and the resources of this State and the neighboring ones, which, directed as they would be, will effectually disappoint and baffle the deep-laid schemes of the enemy."

"I am fully persuaded, and upon good military principles," writes Washington in reply, "that the measures I have adopted will give more effectual and speedy relief to the State of Virginia, than my marching thither, with dictatorial powers, at the head of every man I could draw from hence, without leaving the important posts on the North River quite defenceless, and these States open to devastation and ruin. My present plan of operation, which I have been preparing with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, with proper support pro-

* Bolton's Hist. of Westchester Co., vol. i. p. 243.

duce one of two things, either the fall of New York, or a withdrawal of the troops from Virginia, excepting a garrison at Portsmouth, at which place I have no doubt of the enemy's intention of establishing a permanent post."

Within two or three days after this letter was written, Washington crossed the river at Dobbs Ferry, accompanied by the Count de Rochambeau, General de Beville, and General Duportail, to reconnoitre the British posts on the north end of New York Island. They were escorted by one hundred and fifty of the New Jersey troops, and spent the day on the Jersey heights ascertaining the exact position of the enemy on the opposite shore. Their next movement was to reconnoitre the enemy's posts at King's Bridge and on the east side of New York Island, and to cut off, if possible, such of Delancey's corps as should be found without the British lines. Five thousand troops, French and American, led by the Count de Chastellux and General Lincoln, were to protect this reconn issance, and menace the enemy's posts. Every thing was prepared in secrecy. On the 21st of July, at eight o'clock in the evening, the troops began their march in separate columns; part down the Hudson River road, part down the Sawmill River valley; part by the Eastchester road. Scammel's light infantry advanced through the fields to waylay the roads, stop all communication, and prevent intelligence getting to the enemy. Sheldon's cavalry with the Connecticut troops were to scour Throg's Neck. Sheldon's infantry and Lauzun's lancers were to do the same with the refugee region of Morrisania.

The whole detachment arrived at King's Bridge about daylight, and formed on the height back of Fort Independence. The enemy's forts on New York Island did not appear to have

the least intelligence of what was going on, nor to be aware that hostile troops were upon the heights opposite, until the latter displayed themselves in full array, their arms flashing in the morning sunshine, and their banners, American and French, unfolded to the breeze.

While the enemy was thus held in check, Washington and De Rochambeau, accompanied by engineers and by their staffs, set out under the escort of a troop of dragoons to reconnoitre the enemy's position and works from every point of view. It was a wide reconnoissance, extending across the country outside of the British lines from the Hudson to the Sound. The whole was done slowly and scientifically, exact notes and diagrams being made of every thing that might be of importance in future operations. As the "cortége" moved slowly along, or paused to make observation, it was cannonaded from the distant works, or from the armed vessels stationed on the neighboring waters, but without injuring it or quickening its movements.

According to De Rochambeau's account, the two reconnoitring generals were at one time in an awkward and hazardous predicament. They had passed, he said, to an island separated by an arm of the sea from the enemy's post on Long Island, and the engineers were employed in making scientific observations, regardless of the firing of small vessels stationed in the Sound. During this time, the two generals, exhausted by fatigue and summer heat, slept under shelter of a hedge. De Rochambeau was the first to awake, and was startled at observing the state of the tide, which during their slumber had been rapidly rising. Awakening Washington and calling his attention to it, they hastened to the causeway by which they had crossed from the mainland. It was covered with water. Two small boats were

brought, in which they embarked with the saddles and bridles of their horses. Two American dragoons then returned in the boats to the shore of the island, where the horses remained under care of their comrades. Two of the horses, which were good swimmers, were held by the bridle and guided across; the rest were driven into the water by the smack of the whip, and followed their leaders; the boats then brought over the rest of the party. De Rochambeau admired this manœuvre as a specimen of American tactics in the management of wild horses; but he thought it lucky that the enemy knew nothing of their embarrassment, which lasted nearly an hour, otherwise they might literally have been caught napping.

While the enemy's works had been thoroughly reconnoitred, light troops and lancers had performed their duty in scouring the neighborhood. The refugee posts which had desolated the country were broken up. Most of the refugees, Washington says, had fled and hid themselves in secret places; some got over by stealth to the adjacent islands, and to the enemy's shipping, and a few were caught. Having effected the purposes of their expedition, the two generals set off with their troops, on the 23d, for their encampment, where they arrived about midnight.

The immediate effect of this threatening movement of Washington, appears in a letter of Sir Henry Clinton to Cornwallis, dated July 26th, requesting him to order three regiments to New York from Carolina. "I shall probably want them as well as the troops you may be able to spare me from the Chesapeake for such offensive or defensive operations as may offer in this quarter." *

* Correspondence relative to operations in Virginia, p. 153.

And Washington writes to Lafayette a few days subsequently: "I think we have already effected one part of the plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield, that is, giving a substantial relief to the Southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence. Our views must now be turned towards endeavoring to expel them totally from those States, if we find ourselves incompetent to the siege of New York."

We will now give the reader a view of affairs in Virginia, and show how they were ultimately affected by these military manœuvres and demonstrations in the neighborhood of King's Bridge.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MOVEMENTS AND COUNTER-MOVEMENTS OF CORNWALLIS AND LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA—TARLETON AND HIS TROOPERS SCOUR THE COUNTRY—A DASH AT THE STATE LEGISLATURE—ATTEMPT TO SURPRISE THE GOVERNOR AT MONTICELLO—RETREAT OF JEFFERSON TO CARTER'S MOUNTAIN—STEUBEN OUTWITTED BY SIMCOE—LAFAYETTE JOINED BY WAYNE AND STEUBEN—ACTS ON THE AGGRESSIVE—DESPERATE MELEE OF MACPHERSON AND SIMCOE—CORNWALLIS PURSUED TO JAMESTOWN ISLAND—MAD ANTHONY IN A MORASS—HIS IMPETUOUS VALOR—ALERTNESS OF LAFAYETTE—WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.

The first object of Lord Cornwallis on the junction of his forces at Petersburg in May, was to strike a blow at Lafayette. The marquis was encamped on the north side of James River, between Wilton and Richmond, with about one thousand regulars, two thousand militia, and fifty dragoons. He was waiting for reinforcements of militia, and for the arrival of General Wayne, with the Pennsylvania line. The latter had been ordered to the South by Washington, nearly three months previously; but unavoidably delayed. Joined by these, Lafayette would venture to receive a blow, "that being beaten, he might at least be beaten with decency, and Cornwallis pay something for his victory." *

His lordship hoped to draw him into an action before thus reinforced, and with that view, marched, on the 24th of May,

* Letter to Hamilton, May 23d.

from Petersburg to James River, which he crossed at Westover, about thirty miles below Richmond. Here he was joined on the 26th by a reinforcement just arrived from New York, part of which he sent under General Leslie to strengthen the garrison at Portsmouth. He was relieved also from military companionship with the infamous Arnold, who obtained leave of absence to return to New York, where business of importance was said to demand his attention. While he was in command of the British army in Virginia, Lafayette had refused to hold any correspondence, or reciprocate any of the civilities of war with him; for which he was highly applauded by Washington.

Being now strongly reinforced, Cornwallis moved to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond. The latter, conscious of the inferiority of his forces, decamped as soon as he heard his lordship had crossed James River. "I am resolved," said he, "on a war of skirmishes, without engaging too far, and above all, to be on my guard against that numerous and excellent cavalry, which the militia dread, as if they were so many savage beasts." He now directed his march toward the upper country, inclining to the north, to favor a junction with Wayne. Cornwallis followed him as far as the upper part of Hanover County, destroying public stores wherever found. He appears to have undervalued Lafayette, on account of his youth. "The boy cannot escape me," said he in a letter which was intercepted. The youth of the marquis, however, aided the celerity of his movements; and now that he had the responsibility of an independent command, he restrained his youthful fire, and love of enterprise. Independence had rendered him cautious. "I am afraid of myself," said he, "as much as of the enemy." *

* Letter to Col. Alex. Hamilton, May 23, 1780.

Cornwallis soon found it impossible either to overtake Lafayette, or prevent his junction with Wayne; he turned his attention, therefore, to other objects.

Greene, in his passage through Virginia, had urged the importance of removing horses out of the way of the enemy; his caution had been neglected; the consequences were now felt. The great number of fine horses in the stables of Virginia gentlemen, who are noted for their love of the noble animal, had enabled Cornwallis to mount many of his troops in first-rate style. These he employed in scouring the country, and destroying public stores. Tarleton and his legion, it is said, were mounted on race-horses. "Under this cloud of light troops," said Lafayette, "it is difficult to counteract any rapid movements they may choose to take!"

The State legislature had been removed for safety to Charlottesville, where it was assembled for the purpose of levying taxes, and drafting militia. Tarleton, with one hundred and eighty cavalry and seventy mounted infantry, was ordered by Cornwallis to make a dash there, break up the legislature, and carry off members. On his way thither, on the 4th of June, he captured and destroyed a convoy of arms and clothing destined for Greene's army in North Carolina. At another place he surprised several persons of note at the house of a Dr. Walker, but lingered so long breakfasting, that a person mounted on a fleet horse had time to reach Charlottesville before him, and spread the alarm. Tarleton crossed the Rivanna, which washes the hill on which Charlottesville is situated; dispersed a small force collected on the bank, and galloped into the town thinking to capture the whole assembly. Seven alone fell into his hands; the rest had made their escape. No better success attended a party

of horse under Captain McLeod, detached to surprise the Governor (Thomas Jefferson), at his residence in Monticello, about three miles from Charlottesville, where several members of the legislature were his guests. The dragoons were espied winding up the mountain; the guests dispersed; the family was hurried off to the residence of Colonel Carter, six miles distant, while the governor himself made a rapid retreat on horseback to Carter's Mountain.

Having set fire to all the public stores at Charlottesville, Tarleton pushed for the point of Fork at the confluence of the Rivanna and Fluvanna; to aid, if necessary, a detachment of yagers, infantry and hussars, sent under Colonel Simcoe to destroy a great quantity of military stores collected at that post. The Baron Steuben, who was stationed there with five hundred Virginia regulars and a few militia, and had heard of the march of Tarleton, had succeeded in transporting the greater part of the stores, as well as his troops, across the river, and as the water was deep and the boats were all on his side, he might have felt himself secure. The unexpected appearance of Simcoe's infantry, however, designedly spread out on the opposite heights, deceived him into the idea that it was the van of the British army. In his alarm he made a night retreat of thirty miles, leaving the greater part of the stores scattered along the river bank; which were destroyed the next morning by a small detachment of the enemy sent across in canoes.

On the 10th of June, Lafayette was at length gladdened by the arrival of Wayne with about nine hundred of the Pennsylvania line. Thus reinforced, he changed his whole plan, and ventured on the aggressive. Cornwallis had gotten between him and a large deposit of military stores at Albemarle Old Court House,

The marquis, by a rapid march at night, through a road long disused, threw himself between the British army and the stores, and, being joined by a numerous body of mountain militia, took a strong position to dispute the advance of the enemy.

Cornwallis did not think it advisable to pursue this enterprise, especially as he heard Lafayette would soon be joined by forces under Baron Steuben. Yielding easy credence, therefore, to a report that the stores had been removed from Albemarle Court House, he turned his face toward the lower part of Virginia, and made a retrograde march, first to Richmond, and afterwards to Williamsburg.

Lafayette, being joined by Steuben and his forces, had about four thousand men under him, one half of whom were regulars. He now followed the British army at the distance of eighteen or twenty miles, throwing forward his light troops to harass their rear, which was covered by Tarleton and Simcoe with their cavalry and infantry.

Cornwallis arrived at Williamsburg on the 25th, and sent out Simcoe with his rangers and a company of yagers to destroy some boats and stores on the Chickahominy River, and to sweep off the cattle of the neighborhood. Lafayette heard of the ravage, and detached Lieutenant-colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, with a corps of light troops and a body of horse under Major McPherson, to intercept the marauders. As the infantry could not push on fast enough for the emergency, McPherson took up fifty of them behind fifty of his dragoons, and dashed on. He overtook a company of Simcoe's rangers under Captain Shank, about six miles from Williamsburg, foraging at a farm; a sharp encounter took place; McPherson at the outset was un-

horsed and severely hurt. The action continued. Simcoe with his infantry, who had been in the advance convoying a drove of cattle, now engaged in the fight. Butler's riflemen began to arrive, and supported the dragoons. It was a desperate melee; much execution was done on both sides. Neither knew the strength of the force they were contending with; but supposed it the advance guard of the opposite army. An alarm gun was fired by the British on a neighboring hill. It was answered by alarm guns at Williamsburg. The Americans supposed the whole British force coming out to assail them, and began to retire. Simcoe, imagining Lafayette to be at hand, likewise drew off, and pursued his march to Williamsburg. Both parties fought well; both had been severely handled; both claimed a victory, though neither gained one. The loss in killed and wounded on both sides was severe for the number engaged; but the statements vary, and were never reconciled. It is certain the result gave great satisfaction to the Americans, and inspired them with redoubled ardor.

An express was received by Cornwallis at Williamsburg which obliged him to change his plans. The movements of Washington in the neighborhood of New York, menacing an attack, had produced the desired effect. Sir Henry Clinton, alarmed for the safety of the place, had written to Cornwallis requiring a part of his troops for its protection. His lordship prepared to comply with this requisition, but as it would leave him too weak to continue at Williamsburg, he set out on the 4th of July for Portsmouth.

Lafayette followed him on the ensuing day, and took post within nine miles of his camp; intending, when the main body of the enemy should have crossed the ford to the island of James-

town, to fall upon the rear guard. Cornwallis suspected his design, and prepared to take advantage of it. The wheel carriages, bat horses and baggage, were passed over to the island under the escort of the Queen's rangers; making a great display, as if the main body had crossed; his lordship, however, with the greater part of his forces, remained on the main land, his right covered by ponds, the centre and left by morasses over which a few narrow causeways of logs connected his position with the country, and James Island lay in the rear. His camp was concealed by a skirt of woods, and covered by an outpost.

In the morning of the 6th, as the Americans were advancing, a negro and a dragoon, employed by Tarleton, threw themselves in their way, pretending to be deserters, and informed them that the body of the king's troops had passed James River in the night, leaving nothing behind but the rear guard, composed of the British legion and a detachment of infantry. Persuaded of the fact, Lafayette with his troops crossed the morass on the left of the enemy by a narrow causeway of logs, and halted beyond about sunset. Wayne was detached with a body of riflemen, dragoons and Continental infantry, to make the attack, while the marquis with nine hundred Continentals and some militia stood ready to support him.

Wayne easily routed a patrol of cavalry and drove in the pickets, who had been ordered to give way readily. The outpost which covered the camp defended itself more obstinately; though exceedingly galled by the riflemen. Wayne pushed forward with the Pennsylvania line, eight hundred strong, and three field-pieces, to attack it; at the first discharge of a cannon more than two thousand of the enemy emerged from their concealment, and he found too late that the whole British line was in battle array

before him. To retreat was more dangerous than to go on. So thinking, with that impetuous valor which had gained him the name of Mad Anthony, he ordered a charge to be sounded, and threw himself horse and foot with shouts upon the enemy. It was a sanguinary conflict and a desperate one, for the enemy were outflanking him right and left. Fortunately, the heaviness of the fire had awakened the suspicions of Lafayette:—it was too strong for the outpost of a rear-guard. Spurring to a point of land which commanded a view of the British camp, he discovered the actual force of the enemy, and the peril of Wayne. Galloping back, he sent word to Wayne to fall back to General Muhlenburg's brigade, which had just arrived, and was forming within half a mile of the scene of conflict. Wayne did so in good order, leaving behind him his three cannon; the horses which drew them having been killed.

The whole army then retired across the morass. The enemy's cavalry would have pursued them, but Cornwallis forbade it. The night was falling. The hardihood of Wayne's attack, and his sudden retreat, it is said, deceived and perplexed his lordship. He thought the Americans more strong than they really were, and the retreat a mere feint to draw him into an ambuscade. That retreat, if followed close, might have been converted into a disastrous flight.

The loss of the Americans in this brief but severe conflict is stated by Lafayette to have been one hundred and eighteen killed, wounded and prisoners, including ten officers. The British loss was said to be five officers wounded, and seventy-five privates killed and wounded. "Our field officers," said Wayne, "were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for

the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His natural bravery rendered him deaf to admonition."

Lafayette retreated to Green Springs, where he rallied and reposed his troops. Cornwallis crossed over to Jamestown Island after dark, and three days afterwards, passing James River with his main force, proceeded to Portsmouth. His object was, in conformity to his instructions from the ministry, to establish there or elsewhere on the Chesapeake, a permanent post, to serve as a central point for naval and military operations.

In his letters to Washington giving an account of these events, Lafayette says: "I am anxious to know your opinion of the Virginia campaign. The subjugation of this State was incontestably the principal object of the ministry. I think your diversion has been of more use than any of my manœuvres; but the latter have been above all directed by political views. As long as his lordship desired an action, not a musket has been fired; the moment he would avoid a combat, we began a war of skirmishes; but I had always care not to compromise the army. The naval superiority of the enemy, his superiority in cavalry, in regular troops, and his thousand other advantages, make me consider myself lucky to have come off safe and sound. I had my eye fixed on negotiations in Europe, and I made it my aim to give his lordship the disgrace of a retreat." *

We will now turn to resume the course of General Greene's campaigning in the Carolinas.

* Memoires de Lafayette, t. i. p. 445

CHAPTER XXIV.

GREENE'S RETROGRADE OPERATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA—APPEARS BEFORE CAMDEN—AFFAIR AT HOBKIRK'S HILL—RAWDON ABANDONS CAMDEN—RAPID SUCCESSES OF THE AMERICANS—GREENE'S ATTACK ON THE FORTRESS OF NINETY SIX—OPERATIONS AGAINST LORD RAWDON—GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE—SUMTER SCOURS THE LOWER COUNTRY—DASH OF COLONEL WADE HAMPTON AT THE GATES OF CHARLESTON—EXPLOITS OF LEE AND HAMPTON—OF CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG AT QUIMBY BRIDGE—ACTION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD—END OF THE CAMPAIGN.

It will be recollected that Greene, on the 5th of April, set out from Deep River on a retrograde march to carry the war again into South Carolina, beginning by an attack on Lord Rawdon's post at Camden. Sumter and Marion had been keeping alive the revolutionary fire in that State; the former on the north-east frontier, the latter in his favorite fighting ground between the Pedee and Santee Rivers. On the re-appearance of Greene, they stood ready to aid with heart and hand.

On his way to Camden, Greene detached Lee to join Marion with his legion, and make an attack upon Fort Watson by way of diversion. For himself, he appeared before Camden, but finding it too strong and too well garrisoned, fell back about two miles, and took post at Hobkirk's Hill, hoping to draw his lordship out. He succeeded but too well. His lordship attacked him on the 25th of April, coming

upon him partly by surprise. There was a hard-fought battle, but through some false move among part of his troops, Greene was obliged to retreat. His lordship did not pursue, but shut himself up in Camden, waiting to be rejoined by part of his garrison which was absent.

Greene posted himself near Camden ferry on the Wateree, to intercept these reinforcements. Lee and Marion, who had succeeded in capturing Fort Watson, also took a position on the high hills of Santee for the same purpose. Their efforts were unavailing. Lord Rawdon was rejoined by the other part of his troops. His superior force now threatened to give him the mastery. Greene felt the hazardous nature of his situation. His troops were fatigued by their long marchings; he was disappointed of promised aid and reinforcements from Virginia; still he was undismayed, and prepared for another of his long and stubborn retreats. "We must always operate," said he, "on the maxim that your enemy will do what he ought to do. Lord Rawdon will push us back to the mountains, but we will dispute every inch of ground in the best manner we can." Such were his words to General Davie on the evening of the 9th of May, as he sat in his tent with a map before him studying the roads and fastnesses of the country. An express was to set off for Philadelphia the next morning, and he requested General Davie, who was of that city, to write to the members of Congress with whom he was acquainted, painting in the strongest colors their situation and gloomy prospects.

The very next morning there was a joyful reverse. Greene sent for General Davie. "Rawdon," cried he, exultingly, "is preparing to evacuate Camden; that place was the key of the enemy's line of posts, they will now all fall or be evacuated; all

will now go well. Burn your letters. I shall march immediately to the Congaree."

His lordship had heard of the march of Cornwallis into Virginia, and that all hope of aid from him was at an end. His garrison was out of provisions. All supplies were cut off by the Americans; he had no choice but to evacuate. He left Camden in flames. Immense quantities of stores and baggage were consumed, together with the court-house, the gaol, and many private houses.

Rapid successes now attended the American arms. Fort Motte, the middle post between Camden and Ninety Six, was taken by Marion and Lee. Lee next captured Granby, and marched to aid Pickens in the siege of Augusta; while Greene, having acquired a supply of arms, ammunition, and provisions, from the captured forts, sat down before the fortress of Ninety Six, on the 22d of May. It was the great mart and stronghold of the royalists, and was principally garrisoned by royalists from New Jersey and New York, commanded by Colonel Cruger, a native of New York. The siege lasted for nearly a month. The place was valiantly defended. Lee arrived with his legion, having failed before Augusta, and invested a stockaded fort which formed part of the works.

Word was brought that Lord Rawdon was pressing forward with reinforcements, and but a few miles distant on the Saluda. Greene endeavored to get up Sumter, Marion, and Pickens, to his assistance, but they were too far on the right of Lord Rawdon to form a junction. The troops were eager to storm the works before his lordship should arrive. A partial assault was made on the 18th of June. It was a bloody contest. The

stockaded fort was taken, but the troops were repulsed from the main works.

Greene retreated across the Saluda, and halted at Bush River, at twenty miles distance, to observe the motion of the enemy. In a letter thence to Washington, he writes: "My fears are principally from the enemy's superior cavalry. To the northward cavalry is nothing, from the numerous fences; but to the southward, a disorder, by a superior cavalry, may be improved into a defeat, and a defeat into a rout. Virginia and North Carolina could not be brought to consider cavalry of such great importance as they are to the security of the army and the safety of a country."

Lord Rawdon entered Ninety Six on the 21st, but sallied forth again on the 24th, taking with him all the troops capable of fatigue, two thousand in number, without wheel carriage of any kind, or even knapsacks, hoping by a rapid move to overtake Greene. Want of provisions soon obliged him to give up the pursuit, and return to Ninety Six. Leaving about one half of his force there, under Colonel Cruger, he sallied a second time from Ninety Six, at the head of eleven hundred infantry, with cavalry, artillery, and field-pieces, marching by the south side of the Saluda for the Congaree.

He was now pursued in his turn by Greene and Lee. In this march more than fifty of his lordship's soldiers fell dead from heat, fatigue and privation. At Orangeburg, where he arrived on the 8th of July, his lordship was joined by a large detachment under Colonel Stuart.

Greene had followed him closely, and having collected all his detachments, and being joined by Sumter, appeared within four miles of Orangeburg, on the 10th of July, and offered battle.

The offer was not accepted, and the position of Lord Rawdon was too strong to be attacked. Greene remained there two or three days; when, learning that Colonel Cruger was advancing with the residue of the forces from Ninety Six, which would again give his lordship a superiority of force, he moved off with his infantry on the night of the 13th of July, crossed the Saluda, and posted himself on the east side of the Wateree, at the high hills of Santee. In this salubrious and delightful region, where the air was pure and breezy, and the water delicate, he allowed his weary soldiers to repose and refresh themselves, awaiting the arrival of some Continental troops and militia from North Carolina, when he intended to resume his enterprise of driving the enemy from the interior of the country.

At the time when he moved from the neighborhood of Orangeburg (July 13th), he detached Sumter with about a thousand light troops to scour the lower country, and attack the British posts in the vicinity of Charleston, now left uncovered by the concentration of their forces at Orangeburg. Under Sumter acted Marion, Lee, the Hamptons, and other enterprising partisans. They were to act separately in breaking up the minor posts at and about Dorchester, but to unite at Monk's Corner, where Lieutenant-colonel Coates was stationed with the ninth regiment. This post carried, they were to reunite with Greene's army on the high hills of Santee.

Scarce was Sumter on his march, when he received a letter from Greene, dated July 14th, stating that Cruger had formed a junction with Lord Rawdon the preceding night; no time, therefore, was to be lost. "Push your operations night and day: station a party to watch the enemy's motions at Orangeburg. Keep Colonel Lee and General Marion advised of all matters from

above, and tell Colonel Lee to thunder even at the gates of Charleston."

Conformably to these orders, Colonel Henry Hampton with a party was posted to keep an eye on Orangeburg. Lee with his legion, accompanied by Lieutenant-colonel Wade Hampton, and a detachment of cavalry, was sent to carry Dorchester, and then press forward to the gates of Charleston; while Sumter with the main body, took up his line of march along the road on the south side of the Congaree, towards Monk's Corner.

As Lee approached Dorchester, Colonel Wade Hampton, with his cavalry, passed to the east of that place, to a bridge on Goose Creek, to cut off all communication between the garrison and Monk's Corner. His sudden appearance gave the alarm, the garrison abandoned its post, and when Lee arrived there he found it deserted. He proceeded to secure a number of horses and waggons, and some fixed ammunition, which the garrison had left behind, and to send them off to Hampton. Hampton, kept in suspense by this delay, lost patience. He feared that the alarm would spread through the country, and the dash into the vicinity of Charleston be prevented—or, perhaps, that Lee might intend to make it by himself. Abandoning the bridge at Goose Creek, therefore, he set off with his cavalry, clattered down to the neighborhood of the lines, and threw the city into confusion. The bells rang, alarm guns were fired, the citizens turned out under arms. Hampton captured a patrol of dragoons and a guard, at the Quarter House; completed his bravado by parading his cavalry in sight of the sentinels on the advanced works, and then retired, carrying off fifty prisoners, several of them officers.

Lee arrived in the neighborhood on the following day, but too

late to win any laurels. Hampton had been beforehand with him, made the dash, and "thundered at the gate." Both now hastened to rejoin Sumter on the evening of the 16th, who was only waiting to collect his detachments, before he made an attack on Colonel Coates at Monk's Corner. The assault was to be made on the following morning. During the night Coates decamped in silence; the first signal of his departure, was the bursting of flames through the roof of a brick church, which he had used as a magazine, and which contained stores that could not be carried away. A pursuit was commenced; Lee with his legion, and Hampton with the State cavalry, took the lead. Sumter followed with the infantry. The rear-guard of the British, about one hundred strong, was overtaken with the baggage, at the distance of eighteen miles. They were new troops, recently arrived from Ireland, and had not seen service. On being charged by the cavalry sword in hand, they threw down their arms without firing a shot, and cried for quarter, which was granted. While Lee was securing them, Captain Armstrong with the first section of cavalry pushed on in pursuit of Coates and the main body. That officer had crossed a wooden bridge over Quimby Creek, loosened the planks, and was only waiting to be rejoined by his rear-guard, to throw them off, and cut off all pursuit. His troops were partly on a causeway beyond the bridge, partly crowded in a lane. He had heard no alarm guns, and knew nothing of an enemy being at hand, until he saw Armstrong spurring up with his section. Coates gave orders for his troops to halt, form, and march up; a howitzer was brought to bear upon the bridge, and a fatigue party rushed forward to throw off the planks. Armstrong saw the danger, dashed across the bridge, with his section, drove off the artillerists, and cap-

tured the howitzer before it could be discharged. The fatigue men, who had been at work on the bridge, snatched up their guns, gave a volley and fled. Two dragoons fell dead by the howitzer; others were severely wounded. Armstrong's party, in crossing the bridge, had displaced some of the planks, and formed a chasm. Lieutenant Carrington with the second section of dragoons leaped over it; the chasm being thus enlarged, the horses of the third section refused. A pell-mell fight took place between the handful of dragoons who had crossed, and some of the enemy. Armstrong and Carrington were engaged hand to hand with Colonel Coates and his officers, who defended themselves from behind a waggon. The troops were thronging to their aid from lane and causeway. Armstrong, seeing the foe too strong in front, and no reinforcement coming on in rear, wheeled off with some of his men to the left, galloped into the woods, and pushed up along the stream to ford it, and seek the main body.

During the melée, Lee had come up and endeavored with the dragoons of the third section to replace the planks of the bridge. Their efforts were vain; the water was deep, the mud deeper; there was no foothold, nor was there any firm spot where to swim the horses across.

While they were thus occupied, Colonel Coates, with his men, opened a fire upon them from the other end of the bridge; having no fire-arms to reply with, they were obliged to retire. The remainder of the planks were then thrown off from the bridge, after which Colonel Coates took post on an adjacent plantation, made the dwelling-house, which stood on a rising ground, his citadel, planted the howitzer before it, and distributed part of his men in outhouses and within fences, and garden pickets, which sheltered them from the attack of cavalry. Here he awaited the

arrival of Sumter with the main body, determined to make a desperate defence.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon, that Sumter with his forces appeared upon the ground, having had to make a considerable circuit on account of the destruction of the bridge.

By four o'clock the attack commenced. Sumter, with part of the troops, advanced in front under cover of a line of negro huts, which he wished to secure. Marion, with his brigade, much reduced in number, approached on the right of the enemy, where there was no shelter but fences; the cavalry, not being able to act, remained at a distance as a reserve, and, if necessary, to cover a retreat.

Sumter's brigade soon got possession of the huts, where they used their rifles with sure effect. Marion and his men rushed up through a galling fire to the fences on the right. The enemy retired within the house and garden, and kept up a sharp fire from doors and windows and picketed fence. Unfortunately, the Americans had neglected to bring on their artillery; their rifles and muskets were not sufficient to force the enemy from his stronghold. Having repaired the bridge, they sent off for the artillery and a supply of powder, which accompanied it. The evening was at hand; their ammunition was exhausted, and they retired in good order, intending to renew the combat with artillery in the morning. Leaving the cavalry to watch and control the movements of the enemy, they drew off across Quimby bridge, and encamped at the distance of three miles.

Here, when they came to compare notes, it was found that the loss in killed and wounded had chiefly fallen on Marion's corps. His men, from their exposed situation, had borne the brunt of

the battle; while Sumter's had suffered but litte, being mostly sheltered in the huts. Jealousy and distrust were awakened, and discord reigned in the camp. Partisan and volunteer troops readily fall asunder under such circumstances. Many moved off in the night. Lee, accustomed to act independently, and unwilling, perhaps, to acknowledge Sumter as his superior officer, took up his line of march for head-quarters without consulting him. Sumter still had force enough, now that he was joined by the artillery, to have held the enemy in a state of siege; but he was short of ammunition, only twenty miles from Charleston, at a place accessible by tide water, and he apprehended the approach of Lord Rawdon, who, it was said, was moving down from Orangeburg. He therefore retired across the Santee, and rejoined Greene at his encampment.

So ended this foray, which fell far short of the expectations formed from the spirit and activity of the leaders and their men. Various errors have been pointed out in their operations, but concerted schemes are rarely carried out in all their parts by partisan troops. One of the best effects of the incursion, was the drawing down Lord Rawdon from Orangeburg, with five hundred of his troops. He returned no more to the upper country, but sailed not long after from Charleston for Europe.

Colonel Stuart, who was left in command at Orangeburg, moved forward from that place, and encamped on the south side of the Congaree River, near its junction with the Wateree, and within sixteen miles of Greene's position on the high hills of Santee. The two armies lay in sight of each other's fires, but two large rivers intervened, to secure each party from sudden attack. Both armies, however, needed repose, and military oper-

ations were suspended, as if by mutual consent, during the sultry summer heat.

The campaign had been a severe and trying one, and checkered with vicissitudes; but Greene had succeeded in regaining the greater part of Georgia and the two Carolinas, and, as he said, only wanted a little assistance from the North to complete their recovery. He was soon rejoiced by a letter from Washington, informing him that a detachment from the army of Lafayette might be expected to bring him the required assistance; but he was made still more happy by the following cordial passage in the letter: "It is with the warmest pleasure I express my full approbation of the various movements and operations which your military conduct has lately exhibited, while I confess to you that I am unable to conceive what more could have been done under your circumstances, than has been displayed by your little, persevering, and determined army."

CHAPTER XXV.

WASHINGTON DISAPPOINTED AS TO REINFORCEMENTS—FRENCH ARMAMENT DESTINED FOR THE CHESAPEAKE—ATTEMPTS ON NEW YORK POSTPONED—MARCH OF THE ARMIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE—STRATAGEMS TO DECEIVE THE ENEMY—ARNOLD RAVAGES NEW LONDON—WASHINGTON AT PHILADELPHIA—MARCH OF THE TWO ARMIES THROUGH THE CITY—CORNWALLIS AT YORKTOWN—PREPARATIONS TO PROCEED AGAINST HIM—VISIT TO MOUNT VERNON.

After the grand reconnoissance of the posts on New York Island, related in a former page, the confederate armies remained encamped about Dobbs Ferry and the Greenburg hills, awaiting an augmentation of force for their meditated attack. To Washington's great disappointment, his army was but tardily and scantily recruited, while the garrison of New York was augmented by the arrival of three thousand Hessian troops from Europe. In this predicament he despatched a circular letter to the governments of the Eastern States, representing his delicate and embarrassed situation. "Unable to advance with prudence beyond my present position," writes he, "while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not blamable, highly mysterious at least. Our allies, who were made to expect a very considerable augmentation of force by this time, instead of seeing a prospect of advancing, must conjecture, upon

good grounds, that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away. It will be no small degree of triumph to our enemies, and will have a pernicious influence upon our friends in Europe, should they find such a failure of resource, or such a want of energy to draw it out, that our boasted and extensive preparations end only in idle parade. * * The fulfilment of my engagements must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up and supplying the army. In full confidence that the means which have been voted will be obtained, I shall continue my operations."

Until we study Washington's full, perspicuous letters, we know little of the difficulties he had to struggle with in conducting his campaigns; how often the sounding resolves of legislative bodies disappointed him; how often he had to maintain a bold front when his country failed to back him; how often, as in the siege of Boston, he had to carry on the war without powder!

In a few days came letters from Lafayette, dated 26th and 30th of July, speaking of the embarkation of the greatest part of Cornwallis's army at Portsmouth. "There are in Hampton Roads thirty transport ships full of troops, most of them red coats, and eight or ten brigs with cavalry on board." He supposed their destination to be New York, yet, though wind and weather were favorable, they did not sail. "Should a French fleet now come into Hampton Roads," adds the sanguine Marquis, "the British army would, I think, be ours."

At this juncture arrived the French frigate Concorde at Newport, bringing despatches from Admiral the Count de Grasse.

He was to leave St. Domingo on the 3d of August, with between twenty-five and thirty ships of the line, and a considerable body of land forces, and to steer immediately for the Chesapeake.

This changed the face of affairs, and called for a change in the game. All attempt upon New York was postponed; the whole of the French army, and as large a part of the Americans as could be spared, were to move to Virginia, and co-operate with the Count de Grasse for the redemption of the Southern States. Washington apprised the count by letter of this intention. He wrote also to Lafayette on the 15th of August: "By the time this reaches you, the Count de Grasse will either be in the Chesapeake, or may be looked for every moment. Under these circumstances, whether the enemy remain in full force, or whether they have only a detachment left, you will immediately take such a position as will best enable you to prevent their sudden retreat through North Carolina, which I presume they will attempt the instant they perceive so formidable an armament."

Should General Wayne, with the troops destined for South Carolina, still remain in the neighborhood of James River, and the enemy have made no detachment to the southward, the Marquis was to detain these troops until he heard again from Washington, and was to inform General Greene of the cause of their detention.

"You shall hear further from me," concludes the letter, "as soon as I have concerted plans and formed dispositions for sending a reinforcement from hence. In the mean time, I have only to recommend a continuance of that prudence and good conduct which you have manifested through the whole of your campaign. You will be particularly careful to conceal the expected arrival of

the Count; because, if the enemy are not apprised of it, they will stay on board their transports in the bay, which will be the luckiest circumstance in the world."

Washington's "soul was now in arms." At length, after being baffled and disappointed so often by the incompetency of his means, and above all, thwarted by the enemy's naval potency, he had the possibility of coping with them both on land and sea. The contemplated expedition was likely to consummate his plans, and wind up the fortunes of the war, and he determined to lead it in person. He would take with him something more than two thousand of the American army; the rest, chiefly Northern troops, were to remain with General Heath, who was to hold command of West Point, and the other posts of the Hudson.

Perfect secrecy was maintained as to this change of plan. Preparations were still carried on, as if for an attack upon New York. An extensive encampment was marked out in the Jerseys, and ovens erected, and fuel provided for the baking of bread; as if a part of the besieging force was to be stationed there, thence to make a descent upon the enemy's garrison on Staten Island, in aid of the operations against the city. The American troops, themselves, were kept in ignorance of their destination. General Washington, observes one of the shrewdest of them, matures his great plans and designs under an impenetrable veil of secrecy, and while we repose the fullest confidence in our chief, our opinions (as to his intentions) must be founded only on doubtful conjecture.*

Previous to his decampment, Washington sent forward a

* See Thacher's Military Journal, p. 322.

party of pioneers to clear the roads towards King's Bridge, as if the posts recently reconnoitred were about to be attempted. On the 19th of August, his troops were paraded with their faces in that direction. When all were ready, however, they were ordered to face about, and were marched up along the Hudson River towards King's Ferry.

De Rochambeau, in like manner, broke up his encampment, and took the road by White Plains, North Castle, Pine's Bridge, and Crompond, toward the same point. All Westchester County was again alive with the tramp of troops, the gleam of arms, and the lumbering of artillery and baggage waggons along its roads.

On the 20th, Washington arrived at King's Ferry, and his troops began to cross the Hudson with their baggage, stores, and cannon, and encamp at Haverstraw. He himself crossed in the evening, and took up his quarters at Colonel Hay's, at the White House. Thence he wrote confidentially to Lafayette, on the 21st, now first apprising him of his being on the march with the expedition, and repeating his injunctions that the land and naval forces, already at the scene of action, should so combine their operations, that the English, on the arrival of the French fleet, might not be able to escape. He wrote also to the Count de Grasse, (presuming that the letter would find him in the Chesapeake,) urging him to send up all his frigates and transports to the Head of Elk, by the 8th of September, for the transportation of the combined army, which would be there by that time. He informed him also, that the Count de Barras had resolved to join him in the Chesapeake with his squadron. One is reminded of the tissue of movements planned from a distance, which ended in the capture of Burgoyne.

On the 22d, the French troops arrived by their circuitous route, and began to cross to Stony Point with their artillery, baggage, and stores. The operation occupied between two and three days; during which time Washington took the Count de Rochambeau on a visit to West Point, to show him the citadel of the Highlands, an object of intense interest, in consequence of having been the scene of Arnold's treason.

The two armies having safely crossed the Hudson, commenced, on the 25th, their several lines of march toward the Jerseys; the Americans for Springfield on the Rahway, the French for Whippany towards Trenton. Both armies were still kept in the dark, as to the ultimate object of their movement. An intelligent observer, already quoted, who accompanied the army, writes: "Our situation reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest point. Our destination has been for some time matter of perplexing doubt and uncertainty; bets have run high on one side, that we were to occupy the ground marked out on the Jersey shore, to aid in the siege of New York; and on the other, that we are stealing a march on the enemy, and are actually destined to Virginia, in pursuit of the army under Cornwallis. * * * * A number of bateaux mounted on carriages have followed in our train; supposed for the purpose of conveying the troops over to Staten Island." *

The mystery was at length solved. "We have now passed all the enemy's posts," continues the foregoing writer, "and are pursuing our route, with increased rapidity, toward Philadelphia.

* Thacher's Military Journal, p. 323.

Waggons have been prepared to carry the soldiers' packs, that they may press forward with greater facility. Our destination can no longer be a secret. Cornwallis is unquestionably the object of our present expedition. * * * * His Excellency, General Washington, having succeeded in a masterly piece of *generalship*, has now the satisfaction of leaving his adversary to ruminate on his own mortifying situation, and to anticipate the perilous fate which awaits his friend, Lord Cornwallis, in a different quarter." *

Washington had in fact reached the Delaware with his troops, before Sir Henry Clinton was aware of their destination. It was too late to oppose their march, even had his forces been adequate. As a kind of counterplot, therefore, and in the hope of distracting the attention of the American commander, and drawing off a part of his troops, he hurried off an expedition to the eastward, to insult the State of Connecticut, and attack her seaport of New London.

The command of this expedition, which was to be one of ravage and destruction, was given to Arnold, as if it was necessary to complete the measure of his infamy, that he should carry fire and sword into his native State, and desecrate the very cradle of his infancy.

On the 6th of September he appeared off the harbor of New

* Washington several years afterwards, speaking of this important march in a letter to Noah Webster, writes: "That much trouble was taken, and finesse used, to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object, by fictitious communications, as well as by making a deceptive provision of ovens, forage and boats in his neighborhood, is certain. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army, for I had always conceived where the imposition does not completely take place at home, it would never sufficiently succeed abroad."—Sparks, ix. 404.

London with a fleet of ships and transports and a force of two thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry; partly British troops, but a great part made up of American royalists and refugees, and Hessian Yagers.

New London stands on the west bank of the river Thames. The approach to it was defended by two forts on opposite sides of the river, and about a mile below the town; Fort Trumbull on the west and Fort Griswold on the east side, on a height called Groton Hill. The troops landed in two divisions of about eight hundred men each; one under Lieutenant-colonel Eyre on the east side, the other under Arnold on the west, on the same side with New London, and about three miles below it. Arnold met with but little opposition. The few militia which manned an advance battery and Fort Trumbull, abandoned their posts, and crossed the river to Fort Griswold. He pushed on and took possession of the town.

Colonel Eyre had a harder task. The militia, about one hundred and fifty-seven strong, had collected in Fort Griswold, hastily and imperfectly armed it is true, some of them merely with spears; but they were brave men, and had a brave commander, Colonel William Ledyard, brother of the celebrated traveller. The fort was square and regularly built. Arnold, unaware of its strength, had ordered Colonel Eyre to take it by a coup-de-main. He discovered his mistake, and sent counter orders, but too late.

Colonel Eyre forced the pickets; made his way into the fosse, and attacked the fort on three sides; it was bravely defended; the enemy were repeatedly repulsed; they returned to the assault, scrambled up on each other's shoulders, effected a lodgment on the fraise, and made their way with fixed bayonets

through the embrasures. Colonel Eyre received a mortal wound near the works; Major Montgomery took his place; a negro thrust him through with a spear as he mounted the parapet; Major Bromfield succeeded to the command, and carried the fort at the point of the bayonet. In fact, after the enemy were within the walls, the fighting was at an end and the slaughter commenced. Colonel Ledyard had ordered his men to lay down their arms; but the enemy, exasperated by the resistance they had experienced, and by the death of their officers, continued the deadly work of the musket and the bayonet. Colonel Ledyard, it is said, was thrust through with his own sword after yielding it up to Major Bromfield. Seventy of the garrison were slain, and thirty-five desperately wounded; and most of them after the fort had been taken. The massacre was chiefly perpetrated by the tories, refugees and Hessians. Major Bromfield himself was a New Jersey loyalist. The rancor of such men against their patriot countrymen was always deadly. The loss of the enemy was two officers and forty-six soldiers killed, and eight officers and one hundred and thirty-five soldiers wounded.

Arnold, in the mean time, had carried on the work of destruction at New London. Some of the American shipping had effected their escape up the river, but a number were burnt. Fire, too, was set to the public stores; it communicated to the dwelling-houses, and, in a little while, the whole place was wrapped in flames. The destruction was immense, not only of public but private property: many families once living in affluence were ruined and rendered homeless.

Having completed his ravage, Arnold retreated to his boats, leaving the town still burning. Alarm guns had roused the country; the traitor was pursued by the exasperated yeomanry;

he escaped their well-merited vengeance, but several of his men were killed and wounded.

So ended his career of infamy in his native land; a land which had once delighted to honor him, but in which his name was never thenceforth to be pronounced without a malediction.

The expedition, while it added one more hateful and disgraceful incident to this unnatural war, failed of its main object. It had not diverted Washington from the grand object on which he had fixed his mind. On the 30th of August, he, with his suite, had arrived at Philadelphia about noon, and alighted at the city tavern amidst enthusiastic crowds, who welcomed him with acclamations, but wondered at the object of this visit. During his sojourn in the city he was hospitably entertained at the house of Mr. Morris, the patriotic financier. The greatest difficulty with which he had to contend in his present enterprise, was the want of funds, part of his troops not having received any pay for a long time, and having occasionally given evidence of great discontent. The service upon which they were going was disagreeable to the northern regiments, and the *douceur* of a little hard money would have an effect, Washington thought, to put them into a proper temper. In this emergency he was accommodated by the Count de Rochambeau, with a loan of twenty thousand hard dollars, which Mr. Robert Morris engaged to repay by the first of October. This pecuniary pressure was relieved by the arrival in Boston, on the 25th of August, of Colonel John Laurens from his mission to France, bringing with him two and a half millions of livres in cash, being part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king.

On the 2d of September the American troops passed through

Philadelphia. Their line of march, including appendages and attendants, extended nearly two miles. The general officers and their staffs were well dressed and well mounted, and followed by servants and baggage. In the rear of every brigade were several field-pieces with ammunition waggons. The soldiers kept step to the sound of the drum and fife. In the rear followed a great number of waggons laden with tents, provisions and baggage, beside a few soldiers' wives and children. The weather was warm and dry. The troops as they marched raised a cloud of dust "like a smothering snow-storm," which almost blinded them. The begriming effect was especially mortifying to the campaigner whom we quote, "as ladies were viewing them from the windows of every house as they passed." Notwithstanding the dusty and somewhat ragged plight of the soldiery, however, they were cheered with enthusiasm by the populace, who hailed them as the war-worn defenders of the country.

The French troops entered on the following day, but in different style. Halting within a mile of the city, they arranged their arms and accoutrements; brushed the dust off of their gay white uniforms faced with green, and then marched in with buoyant step and brilliant array to the swelling music of a military band. The streets were again thronged by the shouting populace. The windows were crowded with ladies; among whom probably were some of the beauties who had crowned the British knights in the chivalrous mime of the Mischianza, now ready to bestow smiles and wreaths on their Gallic rivals.

At Philadelphia Washington received despatches from Lafayette, dated the 21st and 24th of August, from his camp at the Forks of York River in Virginia. The embarkation at Portsmouth, which the Marquis had supposed might be intended for

New York, was merely for Yorktown, where Cornwallis had determined to establish the permanent post ordered in his instructions.

Yorktown was a small place situated on a projecting bank on the south side of York River, opposite a promontory called Gloucester Point. The river between was not more than a mile wide, but deep enough to admit ships of a large size and burthen. Here concentrating his forces, he had proceeded to fortify the opposite points, calculating to have the works finished by the beginning of October; at which time Sir Henry Clinton intended to recommence operations on the Chesapeake. Believing that he had no present enemy but Lafayette to guard against, Cornwallis felt so secure in his position, that he wrote to Sir Henry on the 22d of August, offering to detach a thousand or twelve hundred men to strengthen New York against the apprehended attack of the combined armies.

While Cornwallis, undervaluing his youthful adversary, felt thus secure, Lafayette, in conformity to the instructions of Washington, was taking measures to cut off any retreat by land which his lordship might attempt on the arrival of De Grasse. With this view he called upon General Thomas Nelson, the Governor of Virginia, for six hundred of the militia to be collected upon Blackwater; detached troops to the south of James River, under pretext of a design to dislodge the British from Portsmouth, and requested General Wayne to move southward, to be ready to cross James River at Westover.

As to himself, Lafayette was prepared, as soon as he should hear of the arrival of De Grasse, to march at once to Williamsburg and form a junction with the troops which were to be landed from the fleet. Thus a net was quietly drawn round Cornwallis

by the youthful general, while the veteran felt himself so secure that he was talking of detaching troops to New York.

Lafayette, at the time of writing his despatches, was ignorant that Washington had taken command of the expedition coming to his aid, and expressed an affectionate solicitude on the subject. "In the present state of affairs, my dear General," writes he, "I hope you will come yourself to Virginia, and that, if the French army moves this way, I will have at least the satisfaction of beholding you, myself, at the head of the combined armies." In concluding his letter, he writes: "Adieu, my dear General. I heartily thank you for having ordered me to remain in Virginia; and to your goodness to me I am owing the most beautiful prospect I may ever behold."

The letter of Lafayette gave no account of the Count de Grasse, and Washington expressed himself distressed beyond measure to know what had become of that commander. He had heard of an English fleet at sea steering for the Chesapeake, and feared it might arrive and frustrate all the flattering prospects in that quarter. Still, as usual, he looked to the bright side. "Of many contingencies," writes he, "we will hope for the most propitious events. Should the retreat of Lord Cornwallis by water be cut off by the arrival of either of the French fleets, I am persuaded you will do all in your power to prevent his escape by land. May that great felicity be reserved for you."

Washington left Philadelphia on the 5th of September, on his way to the Head of Elk. About three miles below Chester, he was met by an express bearing tidings of the arrival of the Count de Grasse in the Chesapeake with twenty-eight ships of the line. Washington instantly rode back to Chester to rejoice with the Count de Rochambeau, who was coming down to that

place from Philadelphia by water. They had a joyous dinner together, after which Washington proceeded in the evening on his destination.

The express meantime reached Philadelphia most opportunely. There had been a grand review of the French troops, at which the President of Congress and all the fashion of the city were present. It was followed by a banquet given to the officers by the French Minister, the Chevalier de Luzerne. Scarce were the company seated at table, when despatches came announcing the arrival of De Grasse and the landing of three thousand troops under the Marquis St. Simon, who, it was added, had opened a communication with Lafayette.

All now was mutual gratulation at the banquet. The news soon went forth and spread throughout the city. Acclamations were to be heard on all sides, and crowds assembling before the house of the French Minister rent the air with hearty huzzas for Louis the Sixteenth.

Washington reached the Head of Elk on the 6th. The troops and a great part of the stores were already arrived, and beginning to embark. Thence he wrote to the Count De Grasse, felicitating him on his arrival; and informing him that the van of the two armies were about to embark and fall down the Chesapeake, form a junction with the troops under the Count de St. Simon and the Marquis de Lafayette, and co-operate in blocking up Cornwallis in York River, so as to prevent his retreat by land or his getting any supplies from the country. "As it will be of the greatest importance," writes he, "to prevent the escape of his lordship from his present position, I am persuaded that every measure which prudence can dictate will be adopted for that purpose, until the arrival of our complete force, when I hope his

lordship will be compelled to yield his ground to the superior power of our combined forces."

Every thing had thus far gone on well, but there were not vessels enough at the Head of Elk for the immediate transportation of all the troops, ordnance and stores; a part of the troops would have to proceed to Baltimore by land. Leaving General Heath to bring on the American forces, and the Baron de Viomenil the French, Washington, accompanied by De Rochambeau, crossed the Susquehanna early on the 8th, and pushed forward for Baltimore. He was met by a deputation of the citizens, who made him a public address, to which he replied, and his arrival was celebrated in the evening with illuminations.

On the 9th he left Baltimore a little after daybreak, accompanied only by Colonel Humphreys; the rest of his suite were to follow at their ease; for himself, he was determined to reach Mount Vernon that evening. Six years had elapsed since last he was under its roof; six wearing years of toil, of danger, and of constant anxiety. During all that time, and amid all his military cares, he had kept up a regular weekly correspondence with his steward or agent, regulating all the affairs of his rural establishment with as much exactness as he did those of the army.

It was a late hour when he arrived at Mount Vernon; where he was joined by his suite at dinner time on the following day, and by the Count de Rochambeau in the evening. General Chastellux and his aides-de-camp arrived there on the 11th, and Mount Vernon was now crowded with guests, who were all entertained in the ample style of old Virginian hospitality. On the 12th, tearing himself away once more from the home of his heart, Washington with his military associates continued onward to join Lafayette at Williamsburg.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CORNWALLIS AROUSED TO HIS DANGER—HIS RETREAT TO THE CAROLINAS CUT OFF—STRENGTHENS HIS WORKS—ACTION BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND BRITISH FLEETS—WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU VISIT THE FRENCH FLEET—OPERATIONS BEFORE YORKTOWN.

Lord Cornwallis had been completely roused from his dream of security by the appearance, on the 28th of August, of the fleet of Count de Grasse within the capes of the Delaware. Three French ships of the line and a frigate soon anchored at the mouth of York River. The boats of the fleet were immediately busy conveying three thousand three hundred land forces, under the Marquis de St. Simon, up James River to form the preconcerted junction with those under Lafayette.

Awakened to his danger, Cornwallis, as Washington had foreseen, meditated a retreat to the Carolinas. It was too late. York River was blocked up by French ships; James River was filled with armed vessels covering the transportation of the troops. His lordship reconnoitred Williamsburg; it was too strong to be forced, and Wayne had crossed James River to join his troops to those under the marquis. Seeing his retreat cut off in every direction, Cornwallis proceeded to strengthen his works; sending off repeated expresses to apprise Sir Henry Clinton of his perilous situation.

The Count de Grasse, eager to return to the West Indies, urged Lafayette to make an immediate attack upon the British army, with the American and French troops under his command, without waiting for the combined force under Washington and Rochambeau, offering to aid him with marines and sailors from the ships. The admiral was seconded by the Marquis de St Simon. They represented that the works at Yorktown were yet incomplete; and that that place and Gloucester, immediately opposite, might be carried by storm by their superior force. It was a brilliant achievement which they held out to tempt the youthful commander, but he remained undazzled. He would not, for the sake of personal distinction, lavish the lives of the brave men confided to him; but would await the arrival of the combined forces, when success might be attained with little loss, and would leave to Washington the *coup de grace;* in all probability the closing triumph of the war.

The Count de Grasse had been but a few days anchored within the Chesapeake, and fifteen hundred of his seamen were absent, conveying the troops up James River, when Admiral Graves, who then commanded the British naval force on the American coast, appeared with twenty sail off the capes of Virginia. De Grasse, anxious to protect the squadron of the Count de Barras, which was expected from Rhode Island, and which it was the object of Graves to intercept, immediately slipped his cables and put to sea with twenty-four ships, leaving the rest to blockade York and James Rivers.

Washington received information of the sailing of the fleet from the capes, shortly after his departure from Mount Vernon, and instantly despatched missives, ordering the troops who were embarked at the Head of Elk to stop until the receipt of further

intelligence, fearing that the navigation in Chesapeake Bay might not be secure. For two days he remained in anxious uncertainty, until, at Bowling Green, he was relieved by favorable rumors concerning the fleet, which were confirmed on his arriving at Williamsburg on the evening of the 14th.

Admiral Graves, it appeared, on the sallying forth of the French fleet, immediately prepared for action, although he had five ships less than De Grasse. The latter, however, was not disposed to accept the challenge, his force being weakened by the absence of so many of his seamen, employed in transporting troops. His plan was to occupy the enemy by partial actions and skilful manœuvres, so as to retain his possession of the Chesapeake, and cover the arrival of De Barras.

The vans of the two fleets, and some ships of the centre, engaged about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th of September. The conflict soon became animated. Several ships were damaged, and many men killed and wounded on both sides.

De Grasse, who had the advantage of the wind, drew off after sunset; satisfied with the damage done and sustained, and not disposed for a general action; nor was the British admiral inclined to push the engagement so near night, and on a hostile coast. Among his ships that had suffered, one had been so severely handled, that she was no longer seaworthy, and had to be burnt. For four days the fleets remained in sight of each other, repairing damages and manœuvring; but the French having still the advantage of the wind, maintained their prudent policy of avoiding a general engagement. At length De Grasse, learning that De Barras was arrived within the capes, formed a junction with him, and returned with him to his former anchoring ground, with two English frigates which he had captured.

Admiral Graves, disappointed in his hope of intercepting De Barras, and finding the Chesapeake guarded by a superior force with which he could not prudently contend; having, moreover, to encounter the autumnal gales in the battered state of several of his ships, left the coast and bore away for New York. Under convoy of the squadron of De Barras came a fleet of transports, conveying land forces under M. de Choisy, with siege artillery and military stores. It should be mentioned to the credit of De Barras, that, in his orders from the French minister of marine to come to America, he was left at liberty to make a cruise on the banks of Newfoundland; so as not to be obliged to serve under De Grasse, who was his inferior in rank, but whom the minister wished to continue in the command. "But De Barras," writes Lafayette, "nobly took the part of conducting, himself, the artillery from Rhode Island, and of coming with all his vessels and placing himself under the orders of an admiral his junior in service." *

From Williamsburg, Washington sent forward Count Fersen, one of the aides-de-camp of De Rochambeau, to hurry on the French troops with all possible despatch. He wrote to the same purport to General Lincoln: "Every day we now lose," said he, "is comparatively an age; as soon as it is in our power with safety, we ought to take our position near the enemy. Hurry on, then, my dear sir, with your troops, on the wings of speed. The want of our men and stores is now all that retards our immediate operations. Lord Cornwallis is improving every moment to the best advantage; and every day that is given him to make his preparations may cost us many lives to encounter them."

* Memoirs of Lafayette, t. i., p. 467.

It was with great satisfaction Washington learned that Admiral de Barras had anticipated his wishes, in sending transports and prize vessels up the bay to assist in bringing on the French troops. In the mean time he with Count de Rochambeau was desirous of having an interview with the admiral on board of his ship, provided he could send some fast-sailing cutter to receive them. A small ship, the Queen Charlotte, was furnished by the admiral for the purpose. It had been captured on its voyage from Charleston to New York, having Lord Rawdon on board, and had been commodiously fitted up for his lordship's reception.

On board of this vessel Washington and De Rochambeau, with the Chevalier de Chastellux and Generals Knox and Duportail, embarked on the 18th, and proceeding down James River, came the next morning in sight of the French fleet riding at anchor in Lynn Haven Bay, just under the point of Cape Henry. About noon they got along side of the admiral's ship, the Ville de Paris, and were received on board with great ceremony, and naval and military parade. Admiral de Grasse was a tall, fine-looking man, plain in his address and prompt in the discharge of business. A plan of co-operation was soon arranged, to be carried into effect on the arrival of the American and French armies from the North, which were actually on their way down the Chesapeake from the Head of Elk. Business being despatched, dinner was served, after which they were conducted throughout the ship, and received the visits of the officers of the fleet, almost all of whom came on board.

About sunset Washington and his companions took their leave of the admiral, and returned on board of their own little ship; when the yards of all the ships of the fleet were manned,

and a parting salute was thundered from the Ville de Paris. Owing to storms and contrary winds, and other adverse circumstances, the party did not reach Williamsburg until the 22d, when intelligence was received that threatened to disconcert all the plans formed in the recent council on board ship. Admiral Digby, it appeared, had arrived in New York with six ships of the line and a reinforcement of troops. This intelligence Washington instantly transmitted to the Count de Grasse by one of the Count de Rochambeau's aides-de-camp. De Grasse in reply expressed great concern, observing that the position of affairs was changed by the arrival of Digby. "The enemy," writes he, "is now nearly equal to us in strength, and it would be imprudent in me to place myself in a situation that would prevent my attacking them should they attempt to afford succor." He proposed, therefore, to leave two vessels at the mouth of York River, and the corvettes and frigates in James River, which, with the French troops on shore, would be sufficient assistance; and to put to sea with the rest, either to intercept the enemy and fight them where there was good sea room, or to blockade them in New York should they not have sailed.

On reading this letter, Washington dreaded that the present plan of co-operation might likewise fall through, and the fruits of all his schemes and combinations be lost when within his reach. With the assistance of the fleet, the reduction of Yorktown was demonstrably certain, and the surrender of the garrison must go far to terminate the war; whereas the departure of the ships, by leaving an opening for succor to the enemy, might frustrate these brilliant prospects and involve the whole enterprise in ruin and disgrace. Even a momentary absence of the French fleet might enable Cornwallis to evacuate Yorktown and

effect a retreat, with the loss merely of his baggage and artillery, and perhaps a few soldiers. These and other considerations were urged in a letter to the count, remonstrating against his putting to sea. Lafayette was the bearer of the letter, and seconded it with so many particulars respecting the situation of the armies, and argued the case so earnestly and eloquently, that the count consented to remain. It was, furthermore, determined in a council of war of his officers, that a large part of the fleet should anchor in York River; four or five vessels be stationed so as to pass up and down James River, and a battery for cannon and mortars be erected with the aid of the allied troops on Point Comfort.

By the 25th the American and French troops were mostly arrived and encamped near Williamsburg, and preparations were made for the decisive blow.

Yorktown, as has already been noted, is situated on the south side of York River, immediately opposite Gloucester Point. Cornwallis had fortified the town by seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side, connected by intrenchments; and there was a line of batteries along the river. The town was flanked on each side by deep ravines and creeks emptying into York River; their heads, in front of the town, being not more than half a mile apart. The enemy had availed themselves of these natural defences, in the arrangement of extensive outworks, with redoubts strengthened by abatis; field-works mounted with cannon, and trees cut down and left with the branches pointed outward.

Gloucester Point had likewise been fortified. Its batteries, with those of Yorktown, commanding the intervening river. Ships of war were likewise stationed on it, protected by the

guns of the forts, and the channel was obstructed by sunken vessels.

The defence of Gloucester Point was confided to Lieutenant-colonel Dundas, with six or seven hundred men. The enemy's main army was encamped about Yorktown, within the range of the outer redoubts and field-works.

Washington and his staff bivouacked that night on the ground in the open air. He slept under a mulberry tree, the root serving for his pillow. On the following morning the two armies drew out on each side of Beaver Dam Creek. The Americans, forming the right wing, took station on the east side of the creek; the French, forming the left wing, on the west.

That evening Cornwallis received dispatches from Sir Henry Clinton, informing him of the arrival of Admiral Digby, and that a fleet of twenty-three ships of the line, with about five thousand troops, would sail to his assistance probably on the 5th of October. A heavy firing would be made by them on arriving at the entrance of the Chesapeake. On hearing it, if all went well at Yorktown, his lordship was to make three separate columns of smoke; and four, should he still possess the post at Gloucester Point.

Cornwallis immediately wrote in reply: "I have ventured these last two days to look General Washington's whole force in the face in the position on the outside of my works, and have the pleasure to assure your Excellency, that there is but one wish throughout the army, which is that the enemy would advance. * * * * I shall retire this night within the works, and have no doubt, if relief arrives in any reasonable time, York and Gloucester will be both in the possession of His Majesty's troops. I believe your Excellency must depend more on the sound of our

cannon than the signal of smokes for information; however, I will attempt it on the Gloucester side." *

That night his lordship accordingly abandoned his outworks, and drew his troops within the town; a measure strongly censured by Tarleton in his Commentaries as premature; as cooping up the troops in narrow quarters, and giving up a means of disputing, inch by inch, the approaches of the besiegers, and thus gaining time to complete the fortifications of the town.

The outworks thus abandoned were seized upon the next morning by detachments of American light infantry and French troops, and served to cover the troops employed in throwing up breastworks. Colonel Alexander Scammel, officer of the day, while reconnoitring the ground abandoned by the enemy, was set upon by a party of Hessian troopers. He attempted to escape, but was wounded, captured, and carried off to Yorktown. Washington, to whom he had formerly acted as aide-de-camp, interested himself in his favor, and at his request Cornwallis permitted him to be removed to Williamsburg, where he died in the course of a few days. He was an officer of much merit, and his death was deeply regretted by Washington and the army.

The combined French and American forces were now twelve thousand strong, exclusive of the Virginia militia which Governor Nelson had brought into the field. An instance of patriotic self-devotion on the part of this functionary is worthy of special record. The treasury of Virginia was empty; the governor, fearful that the militia would disband for want of pay, had endeavored to procure a loan from a wealthy individual on the credit of the State. In the precarious situation of affairs, the

* Correspondence relative to defence of York, p. 199.

guarantee was not deemed sufficient. The governor pledged his own property, and obtained the loan at his individual risk.

On the morning of the 28th of September, the combined armies marched from Williamsburg toward Yorktown, about twelve miles distant, and encamped at night within two miles of it, driving in the pickets and some patrols of cavalry. General de Choisy was sent across York River, with Lauzun's legion and General Weedon's brigade of militia, to watch the enemy on the side of Gloucester Point.

By the first of October the line of the besiegers, nearly two miles from the works, formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river, so that the investment by land was complete; while the Count de Grasse, with the main fleet, remained in Lynn Haven Bay, to keep off assistance by sea.

About this time the Americans threw up two redoubts in the night, which, on being discovered in the morning, were severely cannonaded. Three of the men were killed and several severely wounded. While Washington was superintending the works, a shot struck the ground close by him, throwing up a cloud of dust. The Rev. Mr. Evans, chaplain in the army, who was standing by him, was greatly agitated. Taking off his hat and showing it covered with sand, "See here, General," exclaimed he. "Mr. Evans," said Washington with grave pleasantry, "you had better carry that home, and show it to your wife and children." *

The besieged army began now to be greatly distressed for want of forage, and had to kill many of their horses, the carcasses of which were continually floating down the river. In the evening of the 2d of October, Tarleton with his legion and the

* Thacher's Military Journal, p. 336.

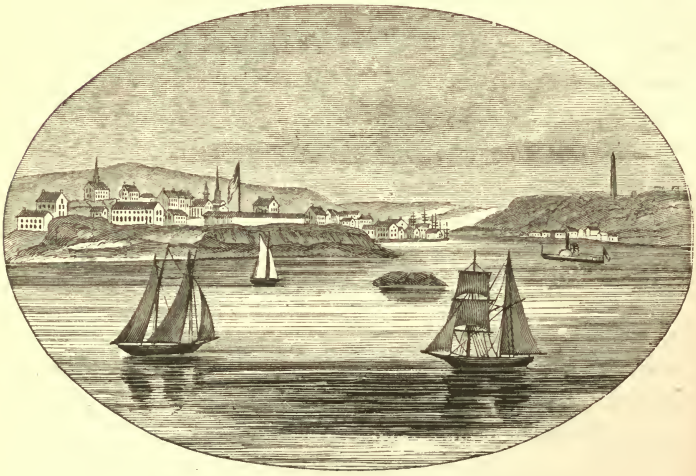
mounted infantry were passed over the river to Gloucester Point, to assist in foraging. At daybreak Lieutenant-colonel Dundas led out part of his garrison to forage the neighboring country. About ten o'clock the waggons and bat horses laden with Indian corn were returning, covered by a party of infantry, with Tarleton and his dragoons as a rear-guard. The waggons and infantry had nearly reached York River, when word was brought that an enemy was advancing in force. The report was confirmed by a cloud of dust from which emerged Lauzun and the French hussars and lancers.

Tarleton, with part of his legion, advanced to meet them; the rest, with Simcoe's dragoons, remained as a rear-guard in a skirt of woods. A skirmish ensued, gallantly sustained on each side, but the superiority of Tarleton's horses gave him the advantage. General Choisy hastened up with a corps of cavalry and infantry to support the hussars. In the medley fight, a dragoon's horse, wounded by a lance, plunged, and overthrew both Tarleton and his steed. The rear-guard rushed from their covert to rescue their commander. They came galloping up in such disorder, that they were roughly received by Lauzun's hussars, who were drawn up on the plain. In the mean time Tarleton scrambled out of the melée, mounted another horse, and ordered a retreat, to enable his men to recover from their confusion. Dismounting forty infantry, he placed them in a thicket. Their fire checked the hussars in their pursuit. The British dragoons rallied, and were about to charge; when the hussars retired behind their infantry; and a fire was opened upon the British by some militia from behind a fence. Tarleton again ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the conflict came to an end. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was one officer and eleven

men; that of the French two officers and fourteen hussars. This was the last affair of Tarleton and his legion in the revolutionary war.

The next day General Choisy, being reinforced by a detachment of marines from the fleet of De Grasse, cut off all communication by land between Gloucester and the country.

At this momentous time, when the first parallel before the besieged city was about to be opened, Washington received dispatches from his faithful coadjutor, General Greene, giving him important intelligence of his co-operations in the South; to consider which we will suspend for a moment our narrative of affairs before Yorktown.



CHAPTER XXVII.

GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE—THE ENEMY HARASSED—GREENE MARCHES AGAINST STUART—BATTLE NEAR EUTAW SPRINGS.

For some weeks in the months of July and August, General Greene had remained encamped with his main force on the high hills of Santee, refreshing and disciplining his men, and awaiting the arrival of promised reinforcements. He was constantly looking to Washington as his polar star by which to steer, and feared dispatches from him had been intercepted. "I wait with impatience for intelligence," said he, "by which I mean to govern my own operations. If things are flattering in the North, I will hazard less in the South; but, if otherwise there, we must risk more here." In the mean time, Marion with his light troops, aided by Colonel Washington with his dragoons, held control over the lower Santee. Lee was detached to operate with Sumter's brigade on the Congaree, and Colonel Harden with his mounted militia was scouring the country about the Edisto. The enemy was thus harassed in every quarter; their convoys and foraging parties waylaid; and Stuart was obliged to obtain all his supplies from below.

Greene was disappointed as to reinforcements. All that he received were two hundred North Carolina levies and five hun-

dred South Carolina militia; still he prepared for a bold effort to drive the enemy from their remaining posts. For that purpose, on the 22d of August he broke up his encampment on the "benign hills of Santee," to march against Colonel Stuart. The latter still lay encamped about sixteen miles distant in a straight line; but the Congaree and Wateree lay between, bordered by swamps overflowed by recent rains; to cross them and reach the hostile camp, it was necessary to make a circuit of seventy miles. While Greene was making it, Stuart abandoned his position, and moved down forty miles to the vicinity of Eutaw Springs, where he was reinforced by a detachment from Charleston with provisions.

Greene followed on by easy marches. He had been joined by General Pickens with a party of the Ninety Six militia, and by the State troops under Lieutenant-colonel Henderson; and now moved slowly to give time for Marion, who was scouring the country about the Edisto, to rejoin him. This was done on the 5th of September at Laurens' place, within seventeen miles of Stuart's camp. Here baggage, tents, every thing that could impede motion, was left behind, and on the afternoon of the seventh the army was pushed on within seven miles of the Eutaws, where it bivouacked for the night, Greene lying on the ground wrapped in his cloak, with the root of a tree for a pillow.

At four o'clock in the morning his little army was in motion. His whole force at that time did not exceed two thousand men; that of the enemy he was seeking, about twenty-three hundred. The Americans, however, were superior in cavalry. Owing to the difficulty of receiving information, and the country being covered with forests, the enemy were not aware of Greene's approach until he was close upon them.

His army advanced in two columns, which were to form the two lines of battle. The first column, commanded by General Marion, was composed of two battalions of North and two of South Carolina militia. The second column of three brigades; one of North Carolina, one of Virginia, and one of Maryland Continental troops. Colonel Lee with his legion covered the right flank, Colonel Henderson the left. Colonel Washington, with his dragoons and the Delaware troops, formed the reserve. Each column had two field-pieces.

Within four miles of Eutaw they met with a British detachment of one hundred and fifty infantry and fifty cavalry under Major Coffin, sent forward to reconnoitre; it was put to flight after a severe skirmish, in which a number were killed and wounded, and several taken prisoners. Supposing this to be the van of the enemy, Greene halted his columns and formed. The South Carolinians in equal divisions formed the right and left of the first line, the North Carolinians the centre. General Marion commanded the right; General Pickens, the left; Colonel Malmedy, the centre. Colonel Henderson with the State troops covered the left of the line; Colonel Lee with his legion the right.

Of the second line, composed of regulars, the North Carolinians, under General Sumner, were on the right; the Marylanders, under Colonel Williams, on the left; the Virginians, under Colonel Campbell, in the centre.

Colonel Washington with his cavalry followed in the rear as a corps de reserve.

Two three-pounders moved on the road in the centre of the first line. Two six-pounders in a like position in the second line.

In this order the troops moved forward, keeping their lines as well as they could through open woods, which covered the country on each side of the road.

Within a mile of the camp they encountered a body of infantry thrown forward by Colonel Stuart, to check their advance while he had time to form his troops in order of battle. These were drawn up in line in a wood two hundred yards west of Eutaw Springs. The right rested on Eutaw Creek (or brook), and was covered by a battalion of grenadiers and infantry under Major Majoribanks, partly concealed among thickets on the margin of the stream. The left of the line extended across the Charleston road, with a reserve corps in a commanding situation covering the road. About fifty yards in the rear of the British line was a cleared field, in which was their encampment, with the tents all standing. Adjoining it was a brick house with a palisadoed garden, which Colonel Stuart intended as a protection, if too much pressed by cavalry.

The advanced party of infantry, which had retired firing before the Americans, formed on the flanks of Colonel Stuart's line. The Carolinian militia had pressed after them. About nine o'clock the action was commenced by the left of the American line, and soon became general. The militia fought for a time with the spirit and firmness of regulars. Their two field-pieces were dismounted; so was one of the enemy's; and there was great carnage on both sides. The militia fought until they had expended seventeen rounds, when they gave way, covered by Lee and Henderson, who fought bravely on the flanks of the line.

Sumner, with the regulars who formed the second line, advanced in fine style to take the place of the first. The enemy

likewise brought their reserve into action; the conflict continued to be bloody and severe. Colonel Henderson, who commanded the State troops in the second line, was severely wounded; this caused some confusion. Sumner's brigade, formed partly of recruits, gave way under the superior fire of the enemy. The British rushed forward to secure their fancied victory. Greene, seeing their line disordered, instantly ordered Williams with his Marylanders to "sweep the field with the bayonet." Williams was seconded by Colonel Campbell with the Virginians. The order was gallantly obeyed. They delivered a deadly volley at forty yards' distance, and then advanced at a brisk rate, with loud shouts and trailed arms, prepared to make the deadly thrust. The British recoiled. While the Marylanders and Virginians attacked them in front, Lee with his legion turned their left flank and charged them in rear. Colonel Hampton with the State cavalry made a great number of prisoners, and Colonel Washington, coming up with his reserve of horse and foot, completed their defeat. They were driven back through their camp; many were captured; many fled along the Charleston road, and others threw themselves into the brick house.

Major Majoribanks and his troops could still enfilade the left flank of the Americans from their covert among the thickets on the border of the stream. Greene ordered Colonel Washington with his dragoons and Kirkwood's Delaware infantry to dislodge them, and Colonel Wade Hampton to assist with the State troops. Colonel Washington, without waiting for the infantry, dashed forward with his dragoons. It was a rash move. The thickets were impervious to cavalry. The dragoons separated into small squads, and endeavored to force their way in. Horses and riders were shot down or bayoneted; most of the officers were either

killed or wounded. Colonel Washington had his horse shot under him; he himself was bayoneted, and would have been slain, had not a British officer interposed, who took him prisoner.

By the time Hampton and Kirkwood came up, the cavalry were routed; the ground was strewed with the dead and the wounded; horses were plunging and struggling in the agonies of death; others galloping about without their riders. While Hampton rallied the scattered cavalry, Kirkwood with his Delawares charged with bayonet upon the enemy in the thickets. Majoribanks fell back with his troops, and made a stand in the palisadoed garden of the brick house.

Victory now seemed certain on the side of the Americans. They had driven the British from the field, and had taken possession of their camp; unfortunately, the soldiers, thinking the day their own, fell to plundering the tents, devouring the food and carousing on the liquors found there. Many of them became intoxicated and unmanageable—the officers interfered in vain; all was riot and disorder.

The enemy in the mean time recovered from their confusion, and opened a fire from every window of the house and from the palisadoed garden. There was a scattering fire also from the woods and thickets on the right and left. Four cannon, one of which had been captured from the enemy, were now advanced by the Americans to batter the house. The fire from the windows was so severe, that most of the officers and men who served the cannon were either killed or wounded. Greene ordered the survivors to retire; they did so, leaving the cannon behind.

Colonel Stuart was by this time rallying his left wing, and advancing to support the right; when Greene, finding his ammu-

nition nearly exhausted, determined to give up the attempt to dislodge the enemy from their places of refuge, since he could not do it without severe loss; whereas the enemy could maintain their posts but a few hours, and he should have a better opportunity of attacking them on their retreat.

He remained on the ground long enough to collect his wounded, excepting those who were too much under the fire of the house, and then, leaving Colonel Hampton with a strong picket on the field, he returned to the position seven miles off, which he had left in the morning; not finding water any where nearer.

The enemy decamped in the night after destroying a large quantity of provisions, staving many barrels of rum, and breaking upwards of a thousand stand of arms which they threw into the springs of the Eutaw; they left behind also seventy of their wounded, who might have impeded the celerity of their retreat. Their loss in killed, wounded, and captured, in this action, was six hundred and thirty-three, of whom five hundred were prisoners in the hands of the Americans; the loss sustained by the latter in killed, wounded and missing, was five hundred and thirty-five. One of the slain most deplored was Colonel Campbell, who had so bravely led on the Virginians. He fell in the shock of the charge with the bayonet. It was a glorious close of a gallant career. In his dying moments he was told of the defeat of the enemy, and is said to have uttered the celebrated ejaculation of General Wolfe, "I die contented."

In the morning, General Greene, who knew not that the enemy had decamped, detached Lee and Marion to scour the country between Eutaw Springs and Charleston, to intercept any reinforcements which might be coming to Colonel Stuart, and to

retard the march of the latter should he be retreating. Stuart, however, had met with reinforcements about fourteen miles from Eutaw, but continued his retreat to Monk's Corner, within twenty-five miles of Charleston.

Greene, when informed of the retreat, had followed with his main force almost to Monk's Corner; finding the number and position of the enemy too strong to be attacked with prudence, he fell back to Eutaw, where he remained a day or two to rest his troops, and then returned by easy marches to his old position near the heights of Santee.

Thence, as usual, he despatched an account of affairs to Washington. "Since I wrote to you before, we have had a most bloody battle. It was by far the most obstinate fight I ever saw. Victory was ours; and had it not been for one of those little incidents which frequently happen in the progress of war, we should have taken the whole British army. * * * I am trying to collect a body of militia to oppose Lord Cornwallis should he attempt to escape through North Carolina to Charleston. Charleston itself may be reduced, if you will bend your forces this way, and it will give me great pleasure to join your Excellency in the attempt; for I shall be equally happy, whether as a principal or subordinate, so that the public good is promoted."

Such was the purport of the intelligence received from Greene. Washington considered the affair at Eutaw Springs a victory, and sent Greene his congratulations. "Fortune," writes he, "must have been coy indeed, had she not yielded at last to so persevering a pursuer as you have been."

"I can say with sincerity, that I feel with the highest degree of pleasure the good effects which you mention as resulting from

the perfect good understanding between you, the marquis and myself. I hope it will never be interrupted, and I am sure it never can be while we are all influenced by the same pure motive, that of love to our country and interest in the cause in which we are embarked."

We will now resume our narrative of the siege of Yorktown.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF YORKTOWN.

General Lincoln had the honor, on the night of the 6th of October, of opening the first parallel before Yorktown. It was within six hundred yards of the enemy; nearly two miles in extent, and the foundations were laid for two redoubts. He had under him a large detachment of French and American troops, and the work was conducted with such silence and secrecy in a night of extreme darkness, that the enemy were not aware of it until daylight. A severe cannonade was then opened from the fortifications; but the men were under cover and continued working; the greatest emulation and good will prevailing between the officers and soldiers of the allied armies thus engaged.

By the afternoon of the 9th the parallel was completed, and two or three batteries were ready to fire upon the town. "General Washington put the match to the first gun," says an observer who was present; "a furious discharge of cannon and mortars immediately followed, and Earl Cornwallis received his first salutation." *

Governor Nelson, who had so nobly pledged his own property

* Thacher's Military Journal.

to raise funds for the public service, gave another proof of his self-sacrificing patriotism on this occasion. He was asked which part of the town could be most effectively cannonaded. He pointed to a large handsome house on a rising ground as the probable head-quarters of the enemy. It proved to be his own.*

The governor had an uncle in the town, very old, and afflicted with the gout. He had been for thirty years secretary under the royal colonial government, and was still called Mr. Secretary Nelson. He had taken no part in the Revolution, unfitted, perhaps, for the struggle, by his advanced age and his infirmities; and had remained in Yorktown when taken possession of by the English, not having any personal enmity to apprehend from them. He had two sons in Washington's army, who now were in the utmost alarm for his safety. At their request Washington sent in a flag, desiring that their father might be permitted to leave the place. "I was a witness," writes the Count de Chastellux in his Memoirs, "of the cruel anxiety of one of those young men, as he kept his eyes fixed upon the gate of the town by which the flag would come out. It seemed as if he were awaiting his own sentence in the reply that was to be received. Lord Cornwallis had not the inhumanity to refuse so just a request."

The appearance of the venerable secretary, his stately person, noble countenance and gray hairs, commanded respect and veneration. "I can never recall without emotion," writes the susceptible count, "his arrival at the head-quarters of General Washington. He was seated, his attack of the gout still continuing,

* Given on the authority of Lafayette. Sparks, viii. 201.

and while we stood around him, he related with a serene visage what had been the effect of our batteries." *

His house had received some of the first shots; one of his negroes had been killed, and the head-quarters of Lord Cornwallis had been so battered, that he had been driven out of them.

The cannonade was kept up almost incessantly for three or four days from the batteries above mentioned, and from three others managed by the French. "Being in the trenches every other night and day," writes an observer already quoted,† "I have a fine opportunity of witnessing the sublime and stupendous scene which is continually exhibiting. The bomb-shells from the besiegers and the besieged are incessantly crossing each other's path in the air. They are clearly visible in the form of a black ball in the day, but in the night they appear like a fiery meteor with a blazing tail, most beautifully brilliant, ascending majestically from the mortar to a certain altitude, and gradually descending to the spot where they are destined to execute their work of destruction. When a shell falls, it whirls round, burrows and excavates the earth to a considerable extent, and, bursting, makes dreadful havoc around." "Some of our shells, overreaching the town, are seen to fall into the river, and bursting, throw up columns of water like the spouting monsters of the deep."

The half-finished works of the enemy suffered severely, the guns were dismounted or silenced, and many men killed. The red-hot shot from the French batteries northwest of the town reached the English shipping. The Charon, a forty-four gun

* Chastellux, vol. ii. p. 19—23. † Thacher.

ship, and three large transports, were set on fire by them. The flames ran up the rigging to the tops of the masts. The conflagration, seen in the darkness of the night, with the accompanying flash and thundering of cannon, and soaring and bursting of shells; and the tremendous explosions of the ships, all presented a scene of mingled magnificence and horror.

On the night of the 11th the second parallel was opened by the Baron Steuben's division, within three hundred yards of the works. The British now made new embrasures, and for two or three days kept up a galling fire upon those at work. The latter were still more annoyed by the flanking fire of two redoubts three hundred yards in front of the British works. As they enfiladed the intrenchments, and were supposed also to command the communication between Yorktown and Gloucester, it was resolved to storm them both, on the night of the 14th; the one nearest the river by a detachment of Americans commanded by Lafayette; the other by a French detachment led by the Baron de Viomenil. The grenadiers of the regiment of Gatinais were to be at the head of the French detachment. This regiment had been formed out of that of Auvergne, of which De Rochambeau had been colonel, and which, by its brave and honorable conduct, had won the appellation of the regiment *D'Aurergne sans tache* (Auvergne without a stain). When De Rochambeau assigned the Gatinais grenadiers their post in the attack, he addressed to them a few soldier-like words. "My lads, I have need of you this night, and hope you will not forget that we have served together in that brave regiment of Auvergne sans tache." They instantly replied, that if he would promise to get their old name restored to them, they would sacrifice themselves to the last man. The promise was given.

In the arrangements for the American assault, Lafayette had given the honor of leading the advance to his own aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-colonel Gimat. This instantly touched the military pride of Hamilton, who exclaimed against it as an unjust preference, it being his tour of duty. The marquis excused himself by alleging that the arrangement had been sanctioned by the commander-in-chief, and could not be changed by him. Hamilton forthwith made a spirited appeal by letter to Washington. The latter, who was ignorant of the circumstances of the case, sent for the marquis, and, finding that it really was Hamilton's tour of duty, directed that he should be reinstated in it, which was done.* It was therefore arranged that Colonel Gimat's battalion should lead the van, and be followed by that of Hamilton, and that the latter should command the whole advanced corps.†

About eight o'clock in the evening rockets were sent up as signals for the simultaneous attack. Hamilton, to his great joy, led the advance of the Americans. The men, without waiting for the sappers to demolish the *abatis* in regular style, pushed them aside or pulled them down with their hands, and scrambled over, like rough bush-fighters. Hamilton was the first to mount the parapet, placing one foot on the shoulder of a soldier, who knelt on one knee for the purpose.† The men mounted after him. Not a musket was fired. The redoubt was carried at the point of the bayonet. The loss of the Americans was one sergeant and eight privates killed, seven officers and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and privates wounded. The loss of

* Lee's Memoirs of the War, ii. 342.

† Lafayette to Washington. Correspondence of the Rev. iii. 426.

‡ Leake's Life of John Lamb, p. 259.

the enemy was eight killed and seventeen taken prisoners. Among the latter was Major Campbell, who had commanded the redoubt. A New Hampshire captain of artillery would have taken his life in revenge of the death of his favorite Colonel Scammel, but Colonel Hamilton prevented him. Not a man was killed after he ceased to resist.*

The French stormed the other redoubt, which was more strongly garrisoned, with equal gallantry, but less precipitation. They proceeded according to rule. The soldiers paused while the sappers removed the *abatis*, during which time they were exposed to a destructive fire, and lost more men than did the Americans in their headlong attack. As the Baron de Viomenil, who led the party, was thus waiting, Major Barbour, Lafayette's aide-de-camp, came through the tremendous fire of the enemy, with a message from the marquis, letting him know that he was in his redoubt, and wished to know where the baron was. "Tell the marquis," replied the latter, "that I am not in mine, but will be in it in five minutes."

The abatis being removed, the troops rushed to the assault. The Chevalier de Lameth, Lafayette's adjutant-general, was the first to mount the parapet of the redoubt, and received a volley at arms' length from the Hessians who manned it. Shot through both knees, he fell back into the ditch, and was conveyed away under care of his friend, the Count de Dumas. The Count de

* Thacher, p. 341.

N.B.—Gordon, in his history of the war, asserts that Lafayette, with the consent of Washington, ordered that, in capturing the redoubt, no quarter should be shown; in retaliation of a massacre perpetrated at Fort Griswold. It is needless to contradict a statement so opposed to the characters of both. It has been denied by both Lafayette and Hamilton. Not one of the enemy was killed unless in action.

Deuxponts, leading on the royal grenadiers of the same name, was likewise wounded.

The grenadiers of the Gatinais regiment remembered the promise of De Rochambeau, and fought with true Gallic fire. One third of them were slain, and among them Captain de Sireuil, a valiant officer of chasseurs; but the regiment by its bravery on this occasion regained from the king its proud name of the *Royal Auvergne.*

Washington was an intensely excited spectator of these assaults, on the result of which so much depended. He had dismounted, given his horse to a servant, and taken his stand in the grand battery with Generals Knox and Lincoln and their staffs. The risk he ran of a chance shot, while watching the attack through an embrasure, made those about him uneasy. One of his aides-de-camp ventured to observe that the situation was very much exposed. "If you think so," replied he gravely, "you are at liberty to step back."

Shortly afterwards a musket ball struck the cannon in the embrasure, rolled along it, and fell at his feet. General Knox grasped his arm. "My dear general," exclaimed he, "we can't spare you yet." "It is a spent ball," replied Washington quietly; "no harm is done."

When all was over and the redoubts were taken, he drew a long breath, and turning to Knox, observed, "The work is done, *and well done!*" Then called to his servant, "William, bring me my horse."

In his despatches he declared that in these assaults nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. Lafayette also testified to the conduct of Colonel Hamilton, "whose well-

known talents and gallantry," writes he, "were on this occasion most conspicuous and serviceable." *

The redoubts thus taken were included the same night in the second parallel, and howitzers were mounted upon them the following day. The capture of them reduced Lord Cornwallis almost to despair. Writing that same day to Sir Henry Clinton, he observes, "My situation now becomes very critical; we dare not show a gun to their old batteries, and I expect that their new ones will open to-morrow morning. * * * The safety of the place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavoring to save us,"—a generous abnegation of self on the part of the beleaguered commander. Had the fleet and army sailed, as he had been given to expect, about the 5th of October, they might have arrived in time to save his lordship; but at the date of the above letter they were still lingering in port. Delay of naval succor was fatal to British operations in this war.

The second parallel was now nearly ready to open. Cornwallis dreaded the effect of its batteries on his almost dismantled works. To retard the danger as much as possible, he ordered an attack on two of the batteries that were in the greatest state of forwardness, their guns to be spiked. It was made a little before daybreak of the 16th, by about three hundred and fifty men, under the direction of Lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie. He divided his forces; a detachment of guards and a company of grenadiers attacked one battery, and a corps of light infantry the other.

The redoubts which covered the batteries were forced in gal-

* Lafayette to Washington. Cor. of the Rev. iii. 426.

lant style, and several pieces of artillery hastily spiked. By this time the supporting troops from the trenches came up, and the enemy were obliged to retreat, leaving behind them seven or eight dead and six prisoners. The French who had guard of this part of the trenches, had four officers and twelve privates killed or wounded, and the Americans lost one sergeant. The mischief had been done too hastily. The spikes were easily extracted, and before evening all the batteries and the parallel were nearly complete.

At this time the garrison could not show a gun on the side of the works exposed to attack, and the shells were nearly expended; the place was no longer tenable. Rather than surrender, Cornwallis determined to attempt an escape. His plan was to leave his sick and wounded and his baggage behind, cross over in the night to Gloucester Point, attack Choisy's camp before daybreak, mount his infantry on the captured cavalry horses, and on such other as could be collected on the road, push for the upper country by rapid marches until opposite the fords of the great rivers, then turn suddenly northward, force his way through Maryland, Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and join Sir Henry Clinton in New York.

It was a wild and daring scheme, but his situation was desperate, and the idea of surrender intolerable.

In pursuance of this design, sixteen large boats were secretly prepared; a detachment was appointed to remain and capitulate for the town's people, the sick and the wounded; a large part of the troops were transported to the Gloucester side of the river before midnight, and the second division had actually embarked, when a violent storm of wind and rain scattered the boats, and drove them a considerable distance down the river. They were

collected with difficulty. It was now too late to effect the passage of the second division before daybreak, and an effort was made to get back the division which had already crossed. It was not done until the morning was far advanced, and the troops in recrossing were exposed to the fire of the American batteries.

The hopes of Lord Cornwallis were now at an end. His works were tumbling in ruins about him, under an incessant cannonade; his garrison was reduced in number by sickness and death, and exhausted by constant watching and severe duty. Unwilling to expose the residue of the brave troops which had stood by him so faithfully, to the dangers and horrors of an assault, which could not fail to be successful, he ordered a parley to be beaten about ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th, and despatched a flag with a letter to Washington proposing a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers might be appointed by each side to meet and settle terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester.

Washington felt unwilling to grant such delay, when reinforcements might be on the way for Cornwallis from New York. In reply, therefore, he requested that, previous to the meeting of commissioners, his lordship's proposals might be sent in writing to the American lines, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities during two hours from the delivery of the letter, would be granted. This was complied with; but as the proposals offered by Cornwallis were not all admissible, Washington drew up a schedule of such terms as he would grant, and transmitted it to his lordship.

The armistice was prolonged. Commissioners met, the Viscount de Noailles and Lieutenant-colonel Laurens on the part of

the allies; Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on the part of the British. After much discussion, a rough draft was made of the terms of capitulation to be submitted to the British general. These Washington caused to be promptly transcribed, and sent to Lord Cornwallis early in the morning of the 19th, with a note expressing his expectation that they would be signed by eleven o'clock, and that the garrison would be ready to march out by two o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Cornwallis was fain to comply, and, accordingly, on the same day, the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester were surrendered to General Washington as commander-in-chief of the combined army; and the ships of war, transports and other vessels, to the Count de Grasse, as commander of the French fleet. The garrison of Yorktown and Gloucester, including the officers of the navy and seamen of every denomination, were to surrender as prisoners of war to the combined army; the land force to remain prisoners to the United States, the seamen to the King of France.

The garrison was to be allowed the same honors granted to the garrison of Charleston when it surrendered to Sir Henry Clinton. The officers were to retain their side arms; both officers and soldiers their private property, and no part of their baggage or papers was to be subject to search or inspection. The

NOTE.

The number of prisoners made by the above capitulation amounted to 7,073, of whom 5,950 were rank and file, six commissioned, and twenty-eight non-commissioned officers, and privates, had previously been captured in the two redoubts, or in the sortie of the garrison. The loss sustained by the garrison during the siege, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to 552. That of the combined army in killed was about 300. The combined army to which Cornwallis surrendered, was estimated at 16,000, of whom 7,000 were French, 5,500 continentals, and 3,500 militia.—*Holmes's Annals*, vol. ii. p. 333.

soldiers were to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, as much by regiments as possible, and supplied with the same rations of provisions as the American soldiers. The officers were to be permitted to proceed, upon parole, to Europe or to any maritime port on the continent of America in possession of British troops. The Bonetta sloop-of-war was to be at the disposal of Lord Cornwallis; to convey an aide-de-camp, with despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, with such soldiers as he might think proper to send to New York, and was to sail without examination. (We will here observe that in this vessel, thus protected from scrutiny, a number of royalists, whose conduct had rendered them peculiarly odious to their countrymen, privately took their departure.)

It was arranged in the allied camp that General Lincoln should receive the submission of the royal army, precisely in the manner in which the submission of his own army had been received on the surrender of Charleston. An eye-witness has given us a graphic description of the ceremony.

"At about 12 o'clock the combined army was drawn up in two lines more than a mile in length, the Americans on the right side of the road, the French on the left. Washington, mounted on a noble steed, and attended by his staff, was in front of the former; the Count de Rochambeau and his suite, of the latter. The French troops, in complete uniform, and well equipped, made a brilliant appearance, and had marched to the ground with a band of music playing, which was a novelty in the American service. The American troops, but part in uniform, and all in garments much the worse for wear, yet had a spirited, soldier-like air, and were not the worse in the eyes of their countrymen for bearing the marks of hard service and great privations. The

concourse of spectators from the country seemed equal in number to the military, yet silence and order prevailed.

"About two o'clock the garrison sallied forth, and passed through with shouldered arms, slow and solemn steps, colors cased, and drums beating a British march. They were all well clad, having been furnished with new suits prior to the capitulation. They were led by General O'Hara on horseback, who, riding up to General Washington, took off his hat and apologized for the non-appearance of Lord Cornwallis, on account of indisposition. Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to Major-general Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison. By him they were conducted into a field where they were to ground their arms. In passing through the line formed by the allied army, their march was careless and irregular, and their aspect sullen, the order to "ground arms" was given by their platoon officers with a tone of deep chagrin, and many of the soldiers threw down their muskets with a violence sufficient to break them. This irregularity was checked by General Lincoln; yet it was excusable in brave men in their unfortunate predicament. This ceremony over, they were conducted back to Yorktown, to remain under guard until removed to their places of destination." *

On the following morning, Washington in general orders congratulated the allied armies on the recent victory, awarding high praise to the officers and troops both French and American, for their conduct during the siege, and specifying by name several of the generals and other officers who had especially distinguished

* Thacher, p. 346.

themselves. All those of his army who were under arrest, were pardoned and set at liberty. "Divine service," it was added, "is to be performed to-morrow in the several brigades and divisions. The commander-in-chief earnestly recommends that the troops, not on duty, should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demand of us."

Cornwallis felt deeply the humiliation of this close to all his wide and wild campaigning, and was made the more sensitive on the subject by circumstances of which he soon became apprised. On the very day that he had been compelled to lay down his arms before Yorktown, the lingering armament intended for his relief sailed from New York. It consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates; with Sir Henry Clinton and seven thousand of his best troops. Sir Henry arrived off the Capes of Virginia on the 24th, and gathered information which led him to apprehend that Lord Cornwallis had capitulated. He hovered off the mouth of the Chesapeake until the 29th, when, having fully ascertained that he had come too late, he turned his tardy prows toward New York.

Cornwallis, in a letter written subsequently, renders the following testimony to the conduct of his captors: "The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender, has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shown to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money, both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression in the breast of every offi-

cer, whenever the fortune of war shall put any of them into our power."

In the mean time, the rejoicings which Washington had commenced with appropriate solemnities in the victorious camp, had spread throughout the Union. "Cornwallis is taken!" was the universal acclaim. It was considered a death-blow to the war.

Congress gave way to transports of joy. Thanks were voted to the commander-in-chief, to the Counts De Rochambeau and De Grasse, to the officers of the allied armies generally, and to the corps of artillery and engineers especially. Two stands of colors, trophies of the capitulation, were voted to Washington, two pieces of field ordnance to De Rochambeau and De Grasse; and it was decreed that a marble column, commemorative of the alliance between France and the United States, and of the victory achieved by their associated arms, should be erected in Yorktown. Finally, Congress issued a proclamation, appointing a day for general thanksgiving and prayer, in acknowledgment of this signal interposition of Divine Providence.

Far different was the feeling of the British ministry when news of the event reached the other side of the Atlantic. Lord George Germain was the first to announce it to Lord North at his office in Downing street. "And how did he take it?" was the inquiry. "As he would have taken a ball in the breast," replied Lord George, "for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly as he paced up and down the apartment, 'Oh God! it is all over!'" *

* Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 99.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DISSOLUTION OF THE COMBINED ARMIES—WASHINGTON AT ELTHAM—DEATH OF JOHN PARKE CUSTIS—WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON—CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT THE NEXT CAMPAIGN—LAFAYETTE SAILS FOR FRANCE—WASHINGTON STIMULATES CONGRESS TO MILITARY PREPARATIONS—PROJECT TO SURPRISE AND CARRY OFF PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY FROM NEW YORK—THE CASE OF CAPTAIN ASGILL.

Washington would have followed up the reduction of Yorktown by a combined operation against Charleston, and addressed a letter to the Count de Grasse on the subject, but the count alleged in reply that the orders of his court, ulterior projects, and his engagements with the Spaniards, rendered it impossible to remain the necessary time for the operation.

The prosecution of the Southern war, therefore, upon the broad scale which Washington had contemplated, had to be relinquished; for, without shipping and a convoy, the troops and every thing necessary for a siege would have to be transported by land with immense trouble, expense and delay; while the enemy, by means of their fleets, could reinforce or withdraw the garrison at pleasure.

Under these circumstances, Washington had to content himself, for the present, with detaching two thousand Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia Continental troops, under General St.

Clair, for the support of General Greene, trusting that, with this aid, he would be able to command the interior of South Carolina, and confine the enemy to the town of Charleston.

A dissolution of the combined forces now took place. The Marquis St. Simon embarked his troops on the last of October, and the Count de Grasse made sail on the 4th of November, taking with him two beautiful horses which Washington had presented to him in token of cordial regard.

Lafayette, seeing there was no probability of further active service in the present year, resolved to return to France on a visit to his family, and, with Washington's approbation, set out for Philadelphia to obtain leave of absence from Congress.

The British prisoners were marched to Winchester in Virginia and Frederickstown in Maryland, and Lord Cornwallis and his principal officers sailed for New York on parole.

The main part of the American army embarked for the Head of Elk, and returned northward under the command of General Lincoln, to be cantoned for the winter in the Jerseys and on the Hudson, so as to be ready for operations against New York, or elsewhere, in the next year's campaign.

The French army were to remain for the winter, in Virginia, and the Count de Rochambeau established his head-quarters at Williamsburg.

Having attended in person to the distribution of ordnance and stores, the departure of prisoners, and the embarkation of the troops under Lincoln, Washington left Yorktown on the 5th of November, and arrived the same day at Eltham, the seat of his friend Colonel Bassett. He arrived just in time to receive the last breath of John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington, as he had, several years previously, rendered tender and pious

offices at the death-bed of his sister, Miss Custis. The deceased had been an object of Washington's care from childhood, and been cherished by him with paternal affection. Formed under his guidance and instructions, he had been fitted to take a part in the public concerns of his country, and had acquitted himself with credit as a member of the Virginia Legislature. He was but twenty-eight years old at the time of his death, and left a widow and four young children. It was an unexpected event, and the dying scene was rendered peculiarly affecting from the presence of the mother and wife of the deceased. Washington remained several days at Eltham to comfort them in their afflictions. As a consolation to Mrs. Washington in her bereavement, he adopted the two youngest children of the deceased, a boy and girl, who thenceforth formed a part of his immediate family.

From Eltham, Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon; but public cares gave him little leisure to attend to his private concerns. We have seen how repeatedly his steady mind had been exercised in the darkest times of the revolutionary struggle, in buoying up the public heart when sinking into despondency. He had now an opposite task to perform, to guard against an overweening confidence inspired by the recent triumph. In a letter to General Greene, he writes: "I shall remain but a few days here, and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this

error, I shall-employ every means in my power, and if, unhappily, we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

In a letter written at the same time to Lafayette, who, having obtained from Congress an indefinite leave of absence, was about to sail, he says: "I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear marquis, not to let you leave this country, without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct, and other important services in the course of the last campaign." In reply to inquiries which the marquis had made respecting the operations of the coming year, he declares that every thing must depend absolutely for success upon the naval force to be employed in these seas and the time of its appearance. "No land force," writes he, "can act decisively unless it is accompanied by a maritime superiority; nor can more than negative advantages be expected without it. For proof of this we have only to recur to the instances of the ease and facility with which the British shifted their ground, as advantages were to be obtained at either extremity of the continent, and to their late heavy loss the moment they failed in their naval superiority. * * * * A doubt did not exist, nor does it at this moment, in any man's mind, of the total extirpation of the British force in the Carolinas and Georgia, if the Count de Grasse could have extended his co-operation two months longer."

We may add here that Congress, after resolutions highly complimentary to the marquis, had, through the secretary of foreign affairs, recommended to the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States, resident in Europe, to confer with the marquis, and avail themselves of his information relative to the situation of national affairs, which information the various heads of de-

partments were instructed to furnish him; and he was furthermore made the bearer of a letter to his sovereign, recommending him in the strongest terms to the royal consideration. Much was anticipated from the generous zeal of Lafayette, and the influence he would be able to exercise in France in favor of the American cause.

Towards the end of November, Washington was in Philadelphia, where Congress received him with distinguished honors. He lost no time in enforcing the policy respecting the ensuing campaign, which he had set forth in his letters to General Greene and the marquis. His views were met by the military committee of Congress, with which he was in frequent consultation, and by the secretaries of war, finance, and public affairs, who attended their conferences. Under his impulse and personal supervision, the military arrangements for 1782 were made with unusual despatch. On the 10th of December resolutions were passed in Congress for requisitions of men and money from the several States; and Washington backed those requisitions by letters to the respective governors, urging prompt compliance. Strenuous exertions, too, were made by Dr. Franklin, then minister in France, to secure a continuance of efficient aid from that power; and a loan of six millions had been promised by the king after hearing of the capitulation of Yorktown.

The persuasion that peace was at hand was, however, too prevalent for the public to be roused to new sacrifices and toils to maintain what was considered the mere shadow of a war. The States were slow in furnishing a small part of their respective quotas of troops, and still slower in answering to the requisitions for money.

After remaining four months in Philadelphia, Washing-

ton set out in March to rejoin the army at Newburg on the Hudson. He was at Morristown in the Jerseys on the 28th, when a bold project was submitted to him by Colonel Matthias Ogden, of the Jersey line. Prince William Henry,* son of the king of England, who was serving as a midshipman in the fleet of Admiral Digby, was at that time in New York with the admiral, an object of great attention to the army, and the tory part of the inhabitants. The project of Colonel Ogden was to surprise the prince and the admiral at their quarters in the city, and bring them off prisoners. He was to be aided in the enterprise by a captain, a subaltern, three sergeants, and thirty-six men. They were to embark from the Jersey shore on a rainy night in four whaleboats, well manned, and rowed with muffled oars, and were to land in New York at half-past nine, at a wharf not far from the quarters of the prince and admiral, which were in Hanover Square. Part of the men were to guard the boats, while Colonel Ogden with a strong party was to proceed to the house, force the doors if necessary, and capture the prince and admiral. In returning to the boats, part of the men, armed with guns and bayonets, were to precede the prisoners, and part to follow at half a gunshot distance, to give front to the enemy until all were embarked.

The plan was approved by Washington, but Colonel Ogden was charged to be careful that no insult or indignity be offered to the prince or admiral, should they be captured. They were, on the contrary, to be treated with all possible respect, and conveyed without delay to Congress.

How far an attempt was made to carry this plan into opera-

* Afterwards William IV.

tion, is not known. An exaggerated alarm seems to have been awakened by extravagant reports circulated in New York, as appears by the following citation from a paper or letter dated April 23d, and transmitted by Washington to Ogden:

"Great seem to be their apprehensions here. About a fortnight ago a number of flat-boats were discovered by a sentinel from the bank of the river (Hudson), which are said to have been intended to fire the suburbs, and in the height of the conflagration to make a descent on the lower part of the city, and wrest from our embraces his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, Prince William Henry, and several other illustrious personages—since which, great precautions have been taken for the security of those gentlemen, by augmenting the guards, and to render their persons as little exposed as possible."

These precautions very probably disconcerted the project of Colonel Ogden, of which we find no other traces.

In a recent letter to General Greene, Washington had expressed himself strongly on the subject of retaliation. "Of all laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere, and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another."

It was but three or four months after this writing, that his judgment and feelings were put to the proof in this respect. We have had occasion to notice the marauds of the New York refugees in the Jerseys. One of their number by the name of Philip White had been captured by the Jersey people, and killed in attempting to escape from those who were conducting him to Monmouth jail. His partisans in New York determined on a signal revenge. Captain Joseph Huddy, an ardent whig, who

had been captured when bravely defending a block-house in Monmouth County, and carried captive to New York, was now drawn forth from prison, conducted into the Jerseys by a party of refugees, headed by a Captain Lippencott, and hanged on the heights of Middletown with a label affixed to his breast, bearing the inscription, "Up goes Huddy for Philip White."

The neighboring country cried out for retaliation. Washington submitted the matter, with all the evidence furnished, to a board of general and field-officers. It was unanimously determined that the offender should be demanded for execution, and, if not given up, that retaliation should be exercised on a British prisoner of equal rank. Washington accordingly sent proofs to Sir Henry Clinton of what he stigmatized as a murder, and demanded that Captain Lippencott, or the officer who commanded the execution of Captain Huddy, should be given up; or if that officer should be inferior in rank, so many of the perpetrators as would, according to the tariff of exchange, be an equivalent. "To do this," said he, "will mark the justice of your Excellency's character. In failure of it, I shall hold myself justifiable in the eyes of God and man, for the measure to which I will resort."

Sir Henry declined a compliance, but stated that he had ordered a strict inquiry into the circumstances of Captain Huddy's death, and would bring the perpetrators of it to immediate trial.

Washington about the same time received the copy of a resolution of Congress approving of his firm and judicious conduct, in his application to the British general at New York, and promising to support him "in his fixed purpose of exemplary retaliation."

He accordingly ordered a selection to be made by lot, for the

above purpose, from among the British officers, prisoners at Lancaster in Pennsylvania. To enhance the painful nature of the case, the lot fell upon Captain Charles Asgill, of the guards, a youth only nineteen years of age, of an amiable character and high hopes and expectations, being only son and heir of Sir Charles Asgill, a wealthy baronet.

The youth bore his lot with firmness, but his fellow prisoners were incensed at Sir Henry Clinton for exposing him to such a fate by refusing to deliver up the culprit. One of their number, a son of the Earl of Ludlow, solicited permission from Washington to proceed to New York and lay the case before Sir Guy Carleton, who had succeeded in command to Sir Henry Clinton. In granting it, Washington intimated that, though deeply affected by the unhappy fate to which Captain Asgill was subjected, and devoutly wishing that his life might be spared, there was but one alternative that could save him, of which the British commander must be aware.

The matter remained for some time in suspense. Washington had ordered that Captain Asgill should be treated "with every tender attention and politeness (consistent with his present situation), which his rank, fortune and connections, together with his unfortunate state, demanded," and the captain himself acknowledged in writing the feeling and attentive manner in which those commands were executed. But on the question of retaliation Washington remained firm.

Lippencott was at length tried by a court-martial, but, after a long sitting, acquitted, it appearing that he had acted under the verbal orders of Governor Franklin, president of the board of associated loyalists. The British commander reprobated the death of Captain Huddy, and broke up the board.

These circumstances changed in some degree the ground upon which Washington was proceeding. He laid the whole matter before Congress, admitted Captain Asgill on parole at Morristown, and subsequently intimated to the secretary of war his private opinion in favor of his release, with permission to go to his friends in Europe.

In the mean time Lady Asgill, the mother of the youth, had written a pathetic letter to the Count de Vergennes, the French minister of state, imploring his intercession in behalf of her son. The letter was shown to the king and queen, and by their direction the count wrote to Washington soliciting the liberation of Asgill. Washington, as has been shown, had already suggested his release, and was annoyed at the delay of Congress in the matter. He now referred to that body the communication from the count, and urged a favorable decision. To his great relief, he received their directions to set Captain Asgill at liberty.

This, like the case of the unfortunate André, was one of the painful and trying predicaments in which a strict sense of public duty obliged Washington to do violence to his natural impulses, and he declares in one of his letters, that the situation of Captain Asgill often filled him with the keenest anguish. "I felt for him on many accounts; and not the least when, viewing him as a man of honor and sentiment, I considered how unfortunate it was for him that a wretch who possessed neither, should be the means of causing him a single pang or a disagreeable sensation."

NOTE.

While these pages are going through the press, we have before us an instance of that conscientious regard for justice which governed Washington's conduct.

A favorite aide-de-camp, Colonel Samuel B. Webb, who had been wounded

in the battles of Bunker's Hill and White Plains, was captured in December 1777, when commanding a Connecticut regiment, and accompanying General Parsons in a descent upon Long Island. He was then but 24 years of age, and the youngest colonel in the army. Presuming upon the favor of General Washington, who had pronounced him one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the service, he wrote to him, reporting his capture, and begging most strenuously for an immediate exchange. He received a prompt, but disappointing reply. Washington lamented his unfortunate condition. "It would give me pleasure," said he, "to render you any services in my power, but it is impossible for me to comply with your request, without violating the principles of justice, and incurring a charge of partiality."

In fact, several officers of Colonel Webb's rank had been a long time in durance, and it was a rule with Washington that those first captured should be first released. To this rule he inflexibly adhered, however his feelings might plead for its infringement. Colonel Webb, in consequence, was not exchanged until the present year; when Washington, still on principles of justice, gave him the brevet rank of Brigadier-general and the command of the light infantry.

CHAPTER XXX.

WASHINGTON CONTINUES HIS PRECAUTIONS—SIR GUY CARLETON BRINGS PACIFIC NEWS—DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY—EXTRAORDINARY LETTER FROM COLONEL NICOLA—INDIGNANT REPLY OF WASHINGTON—JOINT LETTER OF SIR GUY CARLETON AND ADMIRAL DIGBY—JUNCTION OF THE ALLIED ARMIES ON THE HUDSON—CONTEMPLATED REDUCTION OF THE ARMY.

In disposing of the case of Captain Asgill, we have anticipated dates, and must revert to the time when Washington again established his head-quarters at Newburg on the Hudson. The solicitude felt by him on account of the universal relaxation of the sinews of war, was not allayed by reports of pacific speeches, and motions made in the British parliament, which might be delusive. "Even if the nation and parliament," said he, "are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will, undoubtedly, be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands; and instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in treaty by preparing, even in the moment of negotiation, most vigorously for the field."

Sir Guy Carleton arrived in New York early in May to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had solicited his recall. In

a letter dated May 7th, Sir Guy informed Washington of his being joined with Admiral Digby in the commission of peace; he transmitted at the same time printed copies of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the 4th of March, respecting an address to the king in favor of peace; and of a bill reported in consequence thereof, authorizing the king to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted provinces of North America. As this bill, however, had not passed into a law when Sir Guy left England, it presented no basis for a negotiation; and was only cited by him to show the pacific disposition of the British nation, with which he professed the most zealous concurrence. Still, though multiplied circumstances gradually persuaded Washington of a real disposition on the part of Great Britain to terminate the war, he did not think fit to relax his preparations for hostilities.

Great discontents prevailed at this time in the army, both among officers and men. The neglect of the States to furnish their proportions of the sum voted by Congress for the prosecution of the war, had left the army almost destitute. There was scarce money sufficient to feed the troops from day to day; indeed, there were days when they were absolutely in want of provisions. The pay of the officers, too, was greatly in arrear; many of them doubted whether they would ever receive the half-pay decreed to them by Congress for a term of years after the conclusion of the war, and fears began to be expressed that, in the event of peace, they would all be disbanded with their claims unliquidated, and themselves cast upon the community penniless, and unfitted, by long military habitudes, for the gainful pursuits of peace.

At this juncture, Washington received an extraordinary let-

ter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, a veteran officer, once commandant of Fort Mifflin, who had been in habits of intimacy with him, and had warmly interceded in behalf of the suffering army. In this letter he attributed all the ills experienced and anticipated by the army and the public at large, to the existing form of government. He condemned a republican form as incompatible with national prosperity, and advised a mixed government like that of England; which, he had no doubt, on its benefits being properly pointed out, would be readily adopted. "In that case," he adds, "it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory; those qualities that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the idea of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may, therefore, be requisite to give the head of such a constitution as I propose, some title apparently more moderate; but, if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of KING, which, I conceive, would be attended with some material advantages."

Washington saw at once that Nicola was but the organ of a military faction, disposed to make the army the basis of an energetic government, and to place him at the head. The suggestion, backed by the opportunity, might have tempted a man of meaner ambition: from him it drew the following indignant letter:

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my

perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself, or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature."

On the 2d of August, Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote a joint letter to Washington, informing him that they were acquainted, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace had already been commenced at Paris, and that the independence of the United States would be proposed in the first instance by the British commissioner, instead of being made a condition of a general treaty.

Even yet, Washington was wary. "From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy," said he,

"I confess I am induced to doubt every thing; to suspect every thing." * * * "Whatever the real intention of the enemy may be, I think the strictest attention and exertion, which have ever been exercised on our part, instead of being diminished, ought to be increased. Jealousy and precaution at least can do no harm. Too much confidence and supineness may be pernicious in the extreme."

What gave force to this policy was, that as yet no offers had been made on the part of Great Britain, for a general cessation of hostilities, and, although the British commanders were in a manner tied down by the resolves of the House of Commons, to a defensive war, only in the United States, they might be at liberty to transport part of their force to the West Indies, to act against the French possessions in that quarter. With these considerations he wrote to the Count de Rochambeau, then at Baltimore, advising him, for the good of the common cause, to march his troops to the banks of the Hudson, and form a junction with the American army.

The junction took place about the middle of September. The French army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point, where the American forces were paraded under arms to welcome them. The clothing and arms recently received from France or captured at Yorktown, enabled them to make an unusually respectable appearance. Two lines were formed from the landing-place to head-quarters, between which Count Rochambeau passed, escorted by a troop of cavalry; after which he took his station beside General Washington: the music struck up a French march, and the whole army passed in review before them.

The French army encamped on the left of the American,

near Crompond, about ten miles from Verplanck's Point. The greatest good will continued to prevail between the allied forces, though the Americans had but little means of showing hospitality to their gay Gallic friends. "Only conceive the mortification they must suffer, even the general officers," says Washington in a letter to the secretary of war, "when they cannot invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a travelling acquaintance, to a better repast than whiskey hot from the still, and not always that, and a bit of beef without vegetables will afford them."

Speaking of a contemplated reduction of the army to take place on the 1st of January: "While I premise," said he, "that no one I have seen or heard of appears opposed to the principle of reducing the army as circumstances may require; yet I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contemplation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call the ingratitude of the public, involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and suffered every thing that human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death:—I repeat it, that when I consider these irritating circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or dispel the gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature. * * * *

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the reality would justify me in doing it. I could give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paral-

leled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and that there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter-quarters, unless the storm is previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY AT NEWBURG—MEMORIAL OF THE OFFICERS TO CONGRESS—ANONYMOUS PAPERS CIRCULATED IN THE CAMP—MEETING OF OFFICERS CALLED—ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON—RESOLUTIONS IN CONSEQUENCE—LETTERS OF WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT—HIS OPINION OF THE ANONYMOUS ADDRESSES AND THEIR AUTHOR.

The anxious fears of Washington in regard to what might take place on the approaching reduction of the army, were in some degree realized. After the meeting with the French army at Verplanck's Point, he had drawn up his forces to his former encampment at Newburg, where he established his head-quarters for the winter. In the leisure and idleness of a winter camp, the discontents of the army had time to ferment. The arrearages of pay became a topic of constant and angry comment, as well as the question, whether the resolution of Congress, granting half pay to officers who should serve to the end of the war, would be carried into effect. Whence were the funds to arise for such half pay? The national treasury was empty; the States were slow to tax themselves; the resource of foreign loans was nearly exhausted. The articles of confederation required the concurrence of nine States to any act appropriating public money. There had never been nine States in favor of the half pay establishment; was it probable that as many would concur

in applying any scanty funds that might accrue, and which would be imperiously demanded for many other purposes, to the payment of claims known to be unpopular, and to the support of men, who, the necessity for their services being at an end, might be regarded as drones in the community?

The result of these boding conferences was a memorial to Congress in December, from the officers in camp, on behalf of the army, representing the hardships of the case, and proposing that a specific sum should be granted them for the money actually due, and as a commutation for half pay. Three officers were deputed to present the memorial to Congress, and watch over and promote its success.

The memorial gave rise to animated and long discussions in Congress. Some members were for admitting the claims as founded on engagements entered into by the nation; others were for referring them to the respective States of the claimants. The winter passed away without any definite measures on the subject.

On the 10th of March, 1783, an anonymous paper was circulated through the camp, calling a meeting at eleven o'clock the next day, of the general and field-officers, of an officer from each company, and a delegate from the medical staff, to consider a letter just received from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures, if any, should be adopted to obtain that redress of grievances which they seemed to have solicited in vain.

On the following morning an anonymous address to the officers of the army was privately put into circulation. It professed to be from a fellow-soldier, who had shared in their toils and

mingled in their dangers, and who till very lately had believed in the justice of his country.

"After a pursuit of seven long years," observed he, "the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and bloody war; it has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns to bless—whom? a country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress—wants and wishes, which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded? And have you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favor? How have you been answered? Let the letter, which you are called to consider to-morrow, make reply!

"If this, then, be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division; when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this Revolution, and, retiring from the field,

grow old in poverty, wretchedness and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can, go, and carry with you the jest of Tories, and the scorn of Whigs; the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world! Go, starve and be forgotten! But if your spirits should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit sufficient to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles; awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves! If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk-and-water style of your last memorial. Assume a bolder tone, decent, but lively, spirited, and determined; and suspect the man, who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance*, for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of *memorial*. Let it represent in language, that will neither dishonor you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed; how long and how patiently you have suffered; how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them, that, though

you were the first, and would wish to be the last, to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonor, it may drive you from the field; that the wound, often irritated and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress now, must operate like the grave, and part you for ever; that, in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death; if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and 'mock when their fear cometh on.' But let it represent, also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy and them more respectable; that, while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field; and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause; an army victorious over its enemies, victorious over itself."

This bold and eloquent, but dangerous appeal, founded as it was upon the wrongs and sufferings of a gallant army and the shameful want of sympathy in tardy legislators, called for the full exercise of Washington's characteristic firmness, caution and discrimination. In general orders he noticed the anonymous paper, but expressed his confidence that the good sense of officers would prevent them from paying attention to such an irregular invitation; which he reprobated as disorderly. With a view to counteract its effects, he requested a like meeting of officers on the 15th instant, to hear the report of the committee deputed to Congress. "After mature deliberation," added he, "they will devise what further measures ought to be adopted as most ra-

tional and best calculated to obtain the just and important object in view."

On the following day another anonymous address was circulated, written in a more moderate tone, but to the same purport with the first, and affecting to construe the general orders into an approbation of the object sought; only changing the day appointed for the meeting. "Till now," it observed, "the commander-in-chief has regarded the steps you have taken for redress with good wishes alone; his ostensible silence has authorized your meetings, and his private opinion sanctified your claims. Had he disliked the object in view, would not the same sense of duty which forbade you from meeting on the third day of the week, have forbidden you from meeting on the seventh? Is not the same subject held up to your view? and has it not passed the seal of office, and taken all the solemnity of an order? This will give system to your proceedings, and stability to your resolves." &c. &c.

On Saturday, the 15th of March, the meeting took place. Washington had previously sent for the officers, one by one, in private, and enlarged on the loss of character to the whole army, that would result from intemperate resolutions. At the meeting, General Gates was called to the chair. Washington rose and apologized for appearing there, which he had not intended to do when he issued the order directing the assemblage. The diligence, however, which had been used in circulating anonymous writings, rendered it necessary he should give his sentiments to the army, on the nature and tendency of them. He had taken this opportunity to do so, and had committed his thoughts to writing, which, with the indulgence of his brother officers, he would take the liberty of reading to them.

He then proceeded to read a forcible and feeling address, pointing out the irregularity and impropriety of the recent anonymous summons, and the dangerous nature of the anonymous address; a production, as he observed, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment; drawn with great art, calculated to impress the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and to rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief.

On these principles he had opposed the irregular and hasty meeting appointed in the anonymous summons, not from a disinclination to afford officers every opportunity, consistent with their own honor and the dignity of the army, to make known their grievances. "If my conduct heretofore," said he, "has not evinced to you, that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be snpposed at this last stage of the war that I am indifferent to its interests." * * * * * *

"For myself," observes he, in another part of his address, "a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you under every vicissitude of fortune,

and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, will oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that for the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country and those powers we are bound to respect, you may fully command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained;—let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under and specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country; and who wickedly attempts to open the flood-gates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood. By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs

of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice; you will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind;—'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'"

After he had concluded the address, he observed, that as a corroborating testimony of the good disposition in Congress toward the army, he would communicate to them a letter received from a worthy member of that body, who on all occasions had approved himself their fast friend. He produced an able letter from the Hon. Joseph Jones, which, while it pointed out the difficulties and embarrassments of Congress, held up very forcibly the idea that the army would, at all events, be generously dealt with.

Major Shaw, who was present, and from whose memoir we note this scene, relates that Washington, after reading the first paragraph of the letter, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time that *he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind.* "There was something," adds Shaw, "so natural, so unaffected, in this appeal, as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory; it forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye."

"Happy for America," continues Major Shaw, "that she has a patriot army, and equally so that Washington is its leader. I

rejoice in the opportunity I have had of seeing this great man in a variety of situations;—calm and intrepid when the battle raged; patient and persevering under the pressure of misfortune, moderate and possessing himself in the full career of victory. Great as these qualifications deservedly render him, he never appeared to me more truly so than at the assembly we have been speaking of. On other occasions he has been supported by the exertions of an army and the countenance of his friends; but on this he stood single and alone. There was no saying where the passions of an army which were not a little inflamed, might lead; but it was generally allowed that further forbearance was dangerous, and moderation had ceased to be a virtue. Under these circumstances he appeared, not at the head of his troops, but, as it were, in opposition to them; and for a dreadful moment the interests of the army and its general seemed to be in competition! He spoke,—every doubt was dispelled, and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course. Illustrious man! What he says of the army may with equal justice be applied to his own character:—'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'" *

The moment Washington retired from the assemblage, a resolution was moved by the warm-hearted Knox, seconded by General Putnam, and passed unanimously, assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable. Then followed resolutions, declaring that no circumstances of distress or danger should induce a conduct calculated to sully the reputation and

* Quincy's Memoir of Major Shaw, p. 104.

glory acquired at the price of their blood and eight years' faithful services; that they continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country; and that the commander-in-chief should be requested to write to the President of Congress, earnestly entreating a speedy decision on the late address forwarded by a committee of the army.

A letter was accordingly written by Washington, breathing that generous, yet well-tempered spirit, with which he ever pleaded the cause of the army.

"The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of officers," said he, "which I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude, of their country.

"Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those who have so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having, from motives of justice, duty and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to write to your Excellency, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects of the late address from the army to that honorable body; it only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede on their behalf, as I now do, that the sovereign power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced, and

the confidence the army have reposed in the justice of their country."

After referring to former representations made by him to Congress, on the subject of a half pay to be granted to officers for life, he adds: "If, besides the simple payment of their wages, a further compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army have not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then have I been beguiled by prejudice and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not, in the event, perform every thing which has been requested in the late memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited, void of foundation. And if, as has been suggested for the purpose of inflaming their passions, 'the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by the Revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor;' then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude."

This letter to the President was accompanied by other letters to members of Congress; all making similar direct and eloquent appeals. The subject was again taken up in Congress, nine States concurred in a resolution commuting the half pay into a sum equal to five years' whole pay; and the whole matter, at one moment so fraught with danger to the republic,

through the temperate wisdom of Washington, was happily adjusted.

The anonymous addresses to the army, which were considered at the time so insidious and inflammatory, and which certainly were ill-judged and dangerous, have since been avowed by General John Armstrong, a man who has sustained with great credit to himself various eminent posts under our government. At the time of writing them he was a young man, aide-de-camp to General Gates, and he did it at the request of a number of his fellow-officers, indignant at the neglect of their just claims by Congress, and in the belief that the tardy movements of that body required the spur and the lash. Washington, in a letter dated 23d January, 1797, says, "I have since had sufficient reason for believing that the object of the author was just, honorable, and friendly to the country, though the means suggested by him were certainly liable to much misunderstanding and abuse."

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEWS OF PEACE—LETTER OF WASHINGTON IN BEHALF OF THE ARMY—CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES PROCLAIMED—ORDER OF THE CINCINNATI FORMED—LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO THE STATE GOVERNORS—MUTINY IN THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE—LETTER OF WASHINGTON ON THE SUBJECT—TOUR TO THE NORTHERN POSTS.

At length arrived the wished-for news of peace. A general treaty had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January. An armed vessel, the Triumph, belonging to the Count d'Estaing's squadron, arrived at Philadelphia from Cadiz, on the 23d of March, bringing a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, to the President of Congress, communicating the intelligence. In a few days Sir Guy Carleton informed Washington by letter, that he was ordered to proclaim a cessation of hostilities by sea and land.

A similar proclamation issued by Congress, was received by Washington on the 17th of April. Being unaccompanied by any instructions respecting the discharge of the part of the army with him, should the measure be deemed necessary, he found himself in a perplexing situation.

The accounts of peace received at different times, had raised an expectation in the minds of those of his troops that had engaged "for the war," that a speedy discharge must be the consequence of

the proclamation. Most of them could not distinguish between a proclamation of a cessation of hostilities and a definitive declaration of peace, and might consider any further claim on their military services an act of injustice. It was becoming difficult to enforce the discipline necessary to the coherence of an army. Washington represented these circumstances in a letter to the president, and earnestly entreated a prompt determination on the part of Congress, as to what was to be the period of the services of these men, and how he was to act respecting their discharge.

One suggestion of his letter is expressive of his strong sympathy with the patriot soldier, and his knowledge of what formed a matter of pride with the poor fellows who had served and suffered under him. He urged that, in discharging those who had been engaged "for the war," the non-commissioned officers and soldiers should be allowed to take with them, as their own property, and as a gratuity, their arms and accoutrements. "This act," observes he, "would raise pleasing sensations in the minds of these worthy and faithful men, who, from their early engaging in the war at moderate bounties, and from their patient continuance under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly of their country, but have obtained an honorable distinction over those, who, with shorter terms, have gained large pecuniary rewards. This, at a comparatively small expense, would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to these distinguished worthies, and the sense they have of their suffering virtues and services. * * * * * *

"These constant companions of their toils, preserved with sacred attention, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children, as honorary badges of bravery and military merit; and would probably be brought forth on some future

occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory."

This letter despatched, he notified in general orders that the cessation of hostilities should be proclaimed at noon on the following day, and read in the evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army, "after which," adds he, "the chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations."

Having noticed that this auspicious day, the 19th of April, completed the eighth year of the war, and was the anniversary of the eventful conflict at Lexington, he went on in general orders, to impress upon the army a proper idea of the dignified part they were called upon to act.

"The generous task for which we first flew to arms being accomplished; the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured, and the characters of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger, being immortalized by the illustrious appellation of *the patriot army*, nothing now remains, but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying consistency of character, through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions."

The letter which he had written to the president produced a

resolution in Congress, that the service of the men engaged in the war did not expire until the ratification of the definitive articles of peace; but that the commander-in-chief might grant furloughs to such as he thought proper, and that they should be allowed to take their arms with them.

Washington availed himself freely of this permission: furloughs were granted without stint; the men set out singly or in small parties for their rustic homes, and the danger and inconvenience were avoided of disbanding large masses, at a time, of unpaid soldiery. Now and then were to be seen three or four in a group, bound probably to the same neighborhood, beguiling the way with camp jokes and camp stories. The war-worn soldier was always kindly received at the farm-houses along the road, where he might shoulder his gun and fight over his battles. The men thus dismissed on furlough were never called upon to rejoin the army. Once at home, they sank into domestic life; their weapons were hung up over their fire-places; military trophies of the Revolution to be prized by future generations.

In the mean time Sir Guy Carleton was making preparations for the evacuation of the City of New York. The moment he had received the royal order for the cessation of hostilities, he had written for all the shipping that could be procured from Europe and the West Indies. As early as the 27th of April a fleet had sailed for different parts of Nova Scotia, carrying off about seven thousand persons, with all their effects. A great part of these were troops, but many were royalists and refugees, exiled by the laws of the United States. They looked forward with a dreary eye to their voyage, "bound," as one of them said, "to a country where there were nine months of winter and three months of cold weather every year."

On the 6th of May a personal conference took place between Washington and Sir Guy at Orangetown, about the transfer of posts in the United States, held by the British troops, and the delivery of all property stipulated by the treaty to be given up to the Americans. On the 8th of May, Egbert Benson, William S. Smith, and Daniel Parker, were commissioned by Congress to inspect and superintend at New York the embarkation of persons and property, in fulfilment of the seventh article of the provisional treaty.

While sadness and despair prevailed among the tories and refugees in New York, the officers in the patriot camp on the Hudson were not without gloomy feelings at the thought of their approaching separation from each other. Eight years of dangers and hardships, shared in common and nobly sustained, had welded their hearts together, and made it hard to rend them asunder. Prompted by such feelings, General Knox, ever noted for generous impulses, suggested, as a mode of perpetuating the friendships thus formed, and keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp, the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The suggestion met with universal concurrence, and the hearty approbation of Washington.

Meetings were held, at which the Baron Steuben, as senior officer, presided. A plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand, and Huntingdon, and Captain Shaw; and the society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, at the baron's quarters in the old Verplanck House, near Fishkill.

By its formula, the officers of the American army in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends: to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their eldest

male posterity, and in failure thereof, their collateral branches who might be judged worthy of being its supporters and members. In memory of the illustrious Roman, Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, who retired from war to the peaceful duties of the citizen, it was to be called "The Society of the Cincinnati." The objects proposed by it were to preserve inviolate the rights and liberties for which they had contended; to promote and cherish national honor and union between the States; to maintain brotherly kindness toward each other, and extend relief to such officers and their families as might stand in need of it.

In order to obtain funds for the purpose, each officer was to contribute one month's pay, the interest only to be appropriated to the relief of the unfortunate. The general society, for the sake of frequent communications, was to be divided into State societies, and these again into districts. The general society was to meet annually on the first Monday in May, the State societies on each 4th of July, the districts as often as should be agreed on by the State society.

The society was to have an insignia called "The Order of the Cincinnati." It was to be a golden American eagle, bearing on its breast emblematical devices; this was to be suspended by a deep-blue ribbon two inches wide, edged with white; significative of the union of America with France.

Individuals of the respective States, distinguished for patriotism and talents, might be admitted as honorary members for life; their numbers never to exceed a ratio of one to four. The French ministers who had officiated at Philadelphia, and the French admirals, generals, and colonels, who had served in the United States, were to be presented with the insignia of the order, and invited to become members.

Washington was chosen unanimously to officiate as president of it, until the first general meeting, to be held in May, 1784.

On the 8th of June, Washington addressed a letter to the governors of the several States on the subject of the dissolution of the army. The opening of it breathes that aspiration after the serene quiet of private life, which had been his dream of happiness throughout the storms and trials of his anxious career, but the full fruition of which he was never to realize.

"The great object," said he, "for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the service of my country being accomplished, I am now preparing to return to that domestic retirement which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh, through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose."

His letter then described the enviable condition of the citizens of America. "Sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life; and acknowledged possessors of 'absolute freedom and independency.' "This is the time," said he, "of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character for ever. This is the favorable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport

of European politics, which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes.

"With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak the language of freedom and sincerity without disguise.

"I am aware, however," continues he, modestly, "that those who differ from me in political sentiment may perhaps remark, that I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ardent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government; will, I flatter myself, sooner or later convince my countrymen that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address."

He then proceeded ably and eloquently to discuss what he considered the four things essential to the well-being, and even the existence of the United States as an independent power.

First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head, and a perfect acquiescence of the several States, in the full exercise of the prerogative vested in such a head by the constitution.

Second. A sacred regard to public justice in discharging debts and fulfilling contracts made by Congress, for the purpose of carrying on the war.

Third. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; in which care should be taken to place the militia throughout the Union on a regular, uniform and efficient footing. "The militia of this country," said he, "must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility. It is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements and military apparatus should be introduced in every part of the United States."

And Fourth. A disposition among the people of the United States to forget local prejudices and policies; to make mutual concessions, and to sacrifice individual advantages to the interests of the community.

These four things Washington pronounced the pillars on which the glorious character must be supported. "Liberty is the basis; and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country."

We forbear to go into the ample and admirable reasoning with which he expatiates on these heads, and above all, enforces the sacred inviolability of the Union; they have become familiar with every American mind, and ought to govern every American heart. Nor will we dwell upon his touching appeal on the subject of the half pay and commutation promised to the army, and which began to be considered in the odious light of a pension. "That provision," said he, "should be viewed as it really was—a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give to the officers of the army for ser-

vices then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire. I may be allowed to say it was the price of their blood and of your independency; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honor."

Although we have touched upon but a part of this admirable letter, we cannot omit its affecting close, addressed as it was to each individual governor.

"I have thus freely declared what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust, to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the chief magistrate of your State, at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office and all the employments of public life.

"It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature at their next meeting, and that they may be considered the legacy of one, who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the divine benediction on it.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which are the characteristics of the

Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without whose example in those things we can never hope to be a happy nation."

While the patriot army, encamped under the eye of Washington, bore their hardships and privations without flinching, or returned quietly to their homes with, as yet, no actual reward but the weapons with which they had vindicated their country's cause; about eighty newly recruited soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, stationed at Lancaster, suddenly mutinied and set off in a body for Philadelphia, to demand redress of fancied grievances from the legislature of the State. Arriving at that city, they were joined by about two hundred comrades from the barracks, and proceeded on the 2d of June with beat of drum and fixed bayonets to the State House, where Congress and the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania were in session.

Placing sentinels at every door to prevent egress, they sent in a written message to the president and council, threatening military violence if their demands were not complied with in the course of twenty minutes.

Though these menaces were directed against the State government, Congress felt itself outraged by being thus surrounded and blockaded for several hours by an armed soldiery. Fearing lest the State of Pennsylvania might not be able to furnish adequate protection, it adjourned to meet within a few days at Princeton; sending information, in the mean time, to Washington of this mutinous outbreak.

The latter immediately detached General Howe with fifteen hundred men to quell the mutiny and punish the offenders; at the same time, in a letter to the President of Congress, he expressed his indignation and distress at seeing a handful of men, "contemptible in numbers and equally so in point of service, and

not worthy to be called soldiers," insulting the sovereign authority of the Union, and that of their own State. He vindicated the army at large, however, from the stain the behavior of these men might cast upon it. These were mere recruits, soldiers of a day, who had not borne the heat and burden of the war, and had in reality few hardships to complain of. He contrasted their conduct with that of the soldiers recently furloughed;—veterans, who had patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold: who had suffered and bled without a murmur, and who had retired, in perfect good order, to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts or a farthing of money in their pockets. While he gave vent to this indignation and scorn, roused by the "arrogance and folly and wickedness of the mutineers," he declared that he could not sufficiently admire the fidelity, bravery, and patriotism of the rest of the army.

Fortunately, before the troops under General Howe reached Philadelphia, the mutiny had been suppressed without bloodshed. Several of the mutineers were tried by a court-martial, two were condemned to death, but ultimately pardoned, and four received corporal punishment.

Washington now found his situation at head-quarters irksome; there was little to do, and he was liable to be incessantly teased with applications and demands, which he had neither the means nor power to satisfy. He resolved, therefore, to while away part of the time that must intervene before the arrival of the definitive treaty, by making a tour to the northern and western parts of the State, and visiting the places which had been the theatre of important military transactions. He had another object in view; he desired to facilitate as far as in his power the operations which would be necessary for occupying, as soon as

evacuated by British troops, the posts ceded by the treaty of peace.

Governor Clinton accompanied him on the expedition. They set out by water from Newburg, ascended the Hudson to Albany, visited Saratoga and the scene of Burgoyne's surrender, embarked on Lake George, where light boats had been provided for them, traversed that beautiful lake so full of historic interest, proceeded to Ticonderoga and Crown Point; and after reconnoitring those eventful posts, returned to Schenectady, whence they proceeded up the valley of the Mohawk River, "to have a view," writes Washington, "of that tract of country which is so much celebrated for the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its situation." Having reached Fort Schuyler, formerly Fort Stanwix, they crossed over to Wood Creek, which empties into Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. They then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, and viewed Lake Otsego and the portage between that lake and the Mohawk River.

Washington returned to head-quarters at Newburg on the 5th of August, after a tour of at least seven hundred and fifty miles, performed in nineteen days, and for the most part on horseback. In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, written two or three months afterwards, and giving a sketch of his tour through what was, as yet, an unstudied wilderness, he writes: "Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense extent and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt its favors to us with so profuse a hand; would to God, we may

have wisdom enough to improve them. I shall not rest contented till I have explored the western country, and traversed those lines, or a great part of them, which have given bounds to a new empire." The vast advantages of internal communication between the Hudson and the great lakes, which dawned upon Washington's mind in the course of this tour, have since been realized in that grand artery of national wealth, the Erie Canal.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ARMY TO BE DISCHARGED—PARTING ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON—EVACUATION OF NEW YORK—PARTING SCENE OF WASHINGTON WITH HIS OFFICERS AT NEW YORK—WASHINGTON RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION TO CONGRESS—RETIRES TO MOUNT VERNON.

By a proclamation of Congress, dated 18th of October, all officers and soldiers absent on furlough were discharged from further service; and all others who had engaged to serve during the war, were to be discharged from and after the 3d of November. A small force only, composed of those who had enlisted for a definite time, were to be retained in service until the peace establishment should be organized.

In general orders of November 2d, Washington, after adverting to this proclamation, adds: "It only remains for the commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be, and to bid them an affectionate and a long farewell."

He then goes on to make them one of those paternal addresses which so eminently characterize his relationship with his army, so different from that of any other commander. He takes a brief view of the glorious struggle from which they had just emerged; the unpromising circumstances under which they had

undertaken it, and the signal interposition of Providence in behalf of their feeble condition; the unparalleled perseverance of the American armies for eight long years, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement; a perseverance which he justly pronounces to be little short of *a standing miracle*.

Adverting then to the enlarged prospects of happiness opened by the confirmation of national independence and sovereignty, and the ample and profitable employments held out in a Republic so happily circumstanced, he exhorts them to maintain the strongest attachment to THE UNION, and to carry with them into civil society the most conciliatory dispositions; proving themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they had been victorious as soldiers; feeling assured that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry would not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field.

After a warm expression of thanks to the officers and men for the assistance he had received from every class, and in every instance, he adds:

"To the various branches of the army the General takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his invariable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power; that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done.

"And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only offer in their behalf his recom-

mendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed for ever."

There was a straightforward simplicity in Washington's addresses to his army; they were so void of tumid phrases or rhetorical embellishments; the counsels given in them were so sound and practicable; the feelings expressed in them so kind and benevolent; and so perfectly in accordance with his character and conduct, that they always had an irresistible effect on the rudest and roughest hearts.

A person who was present at the breaking up of the army, and whom we have had frequent occasion to cite, observes, on the conduct of the troops, "The advice of their beloved commander-in-chief, and the resolves of Congress to pay and compensate them in such manner as the ability of the United States would permit, operated to keep them quiet and prevent tumult, but no description would be adequate to the painful circumstances of the parting scene." "Both officers and soldiers, long unaccustomed to the affairs of private life, turned loose on the world to starve, and to become the prey to vulture speculators. Never can that melancholy day be forgotten when friends, companions for seven long years in joy and in sorrow, were torn asunder without the hope of ever meeting again, and with prospects of a miserable subsistence in future." *

* Thacher, p. 421.

Notwithstanding every exertion had been made for the evacuation of New York, such was the number of persons and the quantity of effects of all kinds to be conveyed away, that the month of November was far advanced before it could be completed. Sir Guy Carleton had given notice to Washington of the time he supposed the different posts would be vacated, that the Americans might be prepared to take possession of them. In consequence of this notice, General George Clinton, at that time Governor of New York, had summoned the members of the State council to convene at East Chester on the 21st of November, for the purpose of establishing civil government in the districts hitherto occupied by the British; and a detachment of troops was marched from West Point to be ready to take possession of the posts as they were vacated.

On the 21st the British troops were drawn in from the oft-disputed post of King's Bridge and from M'Gowan's Pass, also from the various posts on the eastern part of Long Island. Paulus Hook was relinquished on the following day, and the afternoon of the 25th of November was appointed by Sir Guy for the evacuation of the city and the opposite village of Brooklyn.

Washington, in the mean time, had taken his station at Harlem, accompanied by Governor Clinton, who, in virtue of his office, was to take charge of the city. They found there General Knox with the detachment from West Point. Sir Guy Carleton had intimated a wish that Washington would be at hand to take immediate possession of the city, and prevent all outrage, as he had been informed of a plot to plunder the place whenever the king's troops should be withdrawn. He had engaged, also, that the guards of the redoubts on the East River, covering the

upper part of the town, should be the first to be withdrawn, and that an officer should be sent to give Washington's advanced guard information of their retiring.

Although Washington doubted the existence of any such plot as that which had been reported to the British commander, yet he took precautions accordingly. On the morning of the 25th the American troops, composed of dragoons, light infantry and artillery, moved from Harlem to the Bowery at the upper part of the city. There they remained until the troops in that quarter were withdrawn, when they marched into the city and took possession, the British embarking from the lower parts.

A formal entry then took place of the military and civil authorities. General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suites, on horseback, led the procession, escorted by a troop of Westchester cavalry. Then came the lieutenant-governor and members of the council, General Knox and the officers of the army, the speaker of the Assembly, and a large number of citizens on horseback and on foot.

An American lady, who was at that time very young and had resided during the latter part of the war in the city, has given us an account of the striking contrast between the American and British troops. "We had been accustomed for a long time," said she, "to military display in all the finish and finery of garrison life; the troops just leaving us were as if equipped for show, and with their scarlet uniforms and burnished arms, made a brilliant display; the troops that marched in, on the contrary, were ill-clad and weather-beaten, and made a forlorn appearance; but then they were *our* troops, and as I looked at them, and thought upon all they had done and suffered for us, my heart and my eyes were full, and I admired and gloried

in them the more, because they were weather-beaten and forlorn."

The city was now a scene of public festivity and rejoicing. The governor gave banquets to the French ambassador, the commander-in-chief, the military and civil officers, and a large number of the most eminent citizens, and at night the public were entertained by splendid fireworks.

In the course of a few days Washington prepared to depart for Annapolis, where Congress was assembling, with the intention of asking leave to resign his command. A barge was in waiting about noon on the 4th of December at Whitehall ferry to convey him across the Hudson to Paulus Hook. The principal officers of the army assembled at Fraunces' Tavern in the neighborhood of the ferry, to take a final leave of him. On entering the room, and finding himself surrounded by his old companions in arms, who had shared with him so many scenes of hardship, difficulty, and danger, his agitated feelings overcame his usual self-command. Filling a glass of wine, and turning upon them his benignant but saddened countenance, "With a heart full of love and gratitude," said he, "I now take leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

Having drunk this farewell benediction, he added with emotion, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand."

General Knox, who was nearest, was the first to advance. Washington, affected even to tears, grasped his hand and gave him a brother's embrace. In the same affectionate manner he

took leave severally of the rest. Not a word was spoken. The deep feeling and manly tenderness of these veterans in the parting moment could find no utterance in words. Silent and solemn they followed their loved commander as he left the room, passed through a corps of light infantry, and proceeded on foot to Whitehall ferry. Having entered the barge, he turned to them, took off his hat and waved a silent adieu. They replied in the same manner, and having watched the barge until the intervening point of the Battery shut it from sight, returned, still solemn and silent, to the place where they had assembled.*

On his way to Annapolis, Washington stopped for a few days at Philadelphia, where with his usual exactness in matters of business, he adjusted with the Comptroller of the Treasury his accounts from the commencement of the war down to the 13th of the actual month of December. These were all in his own handwriting, and kept in the cleanest and most accurate manner, each entry being accompanied by a statement of the occasion and object of the charge.

The gross amount was about fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in which were included moneys expended for secret intelligence and service, and in various incidental charges. All this, it must be noted, was an account of money actually expended in the progress of the war; not for arrearage of pay; for it will be recollected Washington accepted no pay. Indeed, on the final adjustment of his accounts, he found himself a considerable loser, having frequently, in the hurry of business, neglected to credit himself with sums drawn from his private purse in moments of exigency.

* Marshall's Life of Washington

The schedule of his public account furnishes not the least among the many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example. It stands a touchstone of honesty in office, and a lasting rebuke on that lavish expenditure of the public money, too often heedlessly, if not wilfully, indulged by military commanders.

In passing through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the scenes of his anxious and precarious campaigns, Washington was every where hailed with enthusiasm by the people, and greeted with addresses by legislative assemblies, and learned and religious institutions. He accepted them all with that modesty inherent in his nature; little thinking that this present popularity was but the early outbreaking of a fame, that was to go on widening and deepening from generation to generation, and extending over the whole civilized world.

Being arrived at Annapolis, he addressed a letter to the President of Congress, on the 20th of December, requesting to know in what manner it would be most proper to offer his resignation; whether in writing or at an audience. The latter mode was adopted, and the Hall of Congress appointed for the ceremonial.

A letter from Washington to the Baron Steuben, written on the 23d, concludes as follows: "This is the last letter I shall write while I continue in the service of my country. The hour of my resignation is fixed at twelve to-day, after which I shall become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac."

At twelve o'clock the gallery, and a great part of the floor of the Hall of Congress, were filled with ladies, with public functionaries of the State, and with general officers. The members

of Congress were seated and covered, as representatives of the sovereignty of the Union. The gentlemen present as spectators were standing and uncovered.

Washington entered, conducted by the secretary of Congress, and took his seat in a chair appointed for him. After a brief pause the president (General Mifflin) informed him, that "the United States in Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communication."

Washington then rose, and in a dignified and impressive manner, delivered a short address.

"The great events," said he, "on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country."

After expressing his obligations to the army in general, and acknowledging the peculiar services, and distinguished merits of the confidential officers who had been attached to his person, and composed his family during the war, and whom he especially recommended to the favor of Congress, he continued—

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God; and those who have the superintendence of them, to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

"Few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes," says a writer who was present, "as the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress." *

Having delivered his commission into the hands of the president, the latter, in reply to his address, bore testimony to the patriotism with which he had answered to the call of his country, and defended its invaded rights before it had formed alliances, and while it was without funds or a government to support him; to the wisdom and fortitude with which he had conducted the great military contest, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. "You retire," added he, "from the theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages."

The very next morning Washington left Annapolis, and hastened to his beloved Mount Vernon, where he arrived the same day, on Christmas-eve, in a frame of mind suited to enjoy the sacred and genial festival.

"The scene is at last closed," said he in a letter to Governor Clinton; "I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

* Editor of the Maryland Gazette.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON—A SOLDIER'S REPOSE—PLANS OF DOMESTIC LIFE—KIND OFFER OF THE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA—HISTORICAL APPLICATIONS—NEWS OF JACOB VAN BRAAM—OPENING OF SPRING—AGRICULTURAL LIFE RESUMED—RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FAIRFAXES—MEETING OF THE ORDER OF CINCINNATI—TOUR OF WASHINGTON AND DR. CRAIK TO THE WEST—IDEAS OF INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT—PARTING WITH LAFAYETTE.

For some time after his return to Mount Vernon, Washington was in a manner locked up by the ice and snow of an uncommonly rigorous winter, so that social intercourse was interrupted, and he could not even pay a visit of duty and affection to his aged mother at Fredericksburg. But it was enough for him at present that he was at length at home at Mount Vernon. Yet the habitudes of the camp still haunted him; he could hardly realize that he was free from military duties; on waking in the morning he almost expected to hear the drum going its stirring rounds and beating the reveillé.

"Strange as it may seem," writes he, to General Knox, "it is nevertheless true, that it was not until very lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind,

that I was no longer a public man, nor had any thing to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a weary traveller must do, who, after treading many a weary step, with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing, with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

And in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Free from the bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame; the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries—as if this globe was insufficient for us all; and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers."

And subsequently, in a letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, inviting her to America to see the country, "young, rude, and uncultivated as it is," for the liberties of which her husband had fought, bled, and acquired much glory, and where every body admired and loved him, he adds: "I am now enjoying do-

mestic ease under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins about me. * * * Come, then, let me entreat you, and call my cottage your own; for your doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles."

During the winter storms, he anticipates the time when the return of the sun will enable him to welcome his friends and companions in arms to partake of his hospitality; and lays down his unpretending plan of receiving the curious visitors who are likely to throng in upon him. "My manner of living," writes he to a friend, "is plain, and I do not mean to be put out of it. A glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready; and such as will be content to partake of them, are always welcome. Those who expect more will be disappointed."

Some degree of economy was necessary, for his financial concerns had suffered during the war, and the products of his estate had fallen off during his long absence.

In the mean time the supreme council of Pennsylvania, properly appreciating the disinterestedness of his conduct, and aware that popular love and popular curiosity would attract crowds of visitors to Mount Vernon, and subject him to extraordinary expenses, had instructed their delegates in Congress to call the attention of that body to these circumstances, with a view to produce some national reward for his eminent services. Before acting upon these instructions, the delegates were directed to send a copy of them to Washington for his approbation.

He received the document while buried in accounts and calculations, and when, had he been of a mercenary disposition, the offered intervention in his favor would have seemed most seasonable; but he at once most gratefully and respectfully declined it, jealously maintaining the satisfaction of having served his country at the sacrifice of his private interests.

Applications began to be made to him by persons desirous of writing the history of the Revolution, for access to the public papers in his possession. He excused himself from submitting to their inspection those relative to the occurrences and transactions of his late command, until Congress should see fit to open their archives to the historian.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, made a similar application to Washington in behalf of a person who purposed to write his memoirs. He replied, that any memoir of his life distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt his feelings than flatter his pride, while he could not furnish the papers and information connected with it without subjecting himself to the imputation of vanity, adding: "I had rather leave it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than, by any act of mine, to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me."

It was a curious circumstance, that scarce had Washington retired from the bustle of arms and hung up his sword at Mount Vernon, when he received a letter from the worthy who had first taught him the use of that sword in these very halls. In a word, Jacob Van Braam, his early teacher of the sword exercise, his fellow campaigner and unlucky interpreter in the affair of the Great Meadows, turned up once more. His letter gave a glance over the current of his life. It would appear that after the close of the French war, he had been allowed half pay in consideration

of his services and misadventures; and, in process of time, had married, and settled on a farm in Wales with his wife and his wife's mother. He had carried with him to England a strong feeling in favor of America, and on the breaking out of the Revolution had been very free, and, as he seemed to think, eloquent and effective in speaking in all companies and at country meetings against the American war. Suddenly, as if to stop his mouth, he received orders from Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, to join his regiment (the 60th), in which he was appointed eldest captain in the 3d battalion. In vain he pleaded his rural occupations; his farm cultivated at so much cost, for which he was in debt, and which must go to ruin should he abandon it so abruptly. No excuse was admitted—he must embark and sail for East Florida, or lose his half pay. He accordingly sailed for St. Augustine in the beginning of 1776, with a couple of hundred recruits picked up in London, resolving to sell out of the army on the first opportunity. By a series of cross-purposes he was prevented from doing so until in 1779, having in the interim made a campaign in Georgia. "He quitted the service," he adds, "with as much pleasure as ever a young man entered it."

He then returned to England and took up his residence in Devonshire; but his invincible propensity to talk against the ministry made his residence there uncomfortable. His next move, therefore, was to the old fertile province of Orleannois in France, where he was still living near Malesherbes, apparently at his ease, enjoying the friendship of the distinguished personage of that name, and better versed, it is to be hoped, in the French language than when he officiated as interpreter in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. The worthy major appeared to con-

template with joy and pride the eminence to which his early pupil in the sword exercise had attained.

"Give me leave, sir, before I conclude," writes he, "to pour out the sentiments of my soul in congratulations for your successes in the American contest; and in wishing you a long life, to enjoy the blessing of a great people whom you have been the chief instrument in freeing from bondage."

So disappears from the scene one of the earliest personages of our history.

As spring advanced, Mount Vernon, as had been anticipated, began to attract numerous visitors. They were received in the frank, unpretending style Washington had determined upon. It was truly edifying to behold how easily and contentedly he subsided from the authoritative commander-in-chief of armies, into the quiet country gentleman. There was nothing awkward or violent in the transition. He seemed to be in his natural element. Mrs. Washington, too, who had presided with quiet dignity at head-quarters, and cheered the wintry gloom of Valley Forge with her presence, presided with equal amenity and grace at the simple board of Mount Vernon. She had a cheerful good sense that always made her an agreeable companion, and was an excellent manager. She has been remarked for an inveterate habit of knitting. It had been acquired, or at least fostered, in the wintry encampments of the Revolution, where she used to set an example to her lady visitors, by diligently plying her needles, knitting stockings for the poor destitute soldiery.

In entering upon the out-door management of his estate, Washington was but doing in person what he had long been doing through others. He had never virtually ceased to be the agriculturist. Throughout all his campaigns he had kept him-

self informed of the course of rural affairs at Mount Vernon. By means of maps on which every field was laid down and numbered, he was enabled to give directions for their several cultivation, and receive accounts of their several crops. No hurry of affairs prevented a correspondence with his overseer or agent, and he exacted weekly reports. Thus his rural were interwoven with his military cares; the agriculturist was mingled with the soldier; and those strong sympathies with the honest cultivators of the soil, and that paternal care of their interests to be noted throughout his military career, may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the sweetening influences of Mount Vernon. Yet as spring returned, and he resumed his rides about the beautiful neighborhood of this haven of his hopes, he must have been mournfully sensible, now and then, of the changes which time and events had effected there.

The Fairfaxes, the kind friends of his boyhood, and social companions of his riper years, were no longer at hand to share his pleasures and lighten his cares. There were no more hunting dinners at Belvoir. He paid a sad visit to that happy resort of his youth, and contemplated with a mournful eye its charred ruins, and the desolation of its once ornamented grounds. George William Fairfax, its former possessor, was in England; his political principles had detained him there during the war and part of his property had been sequestered; still, though an exile, he continued in heart a friend to America, his hand had been open to relieve the distresses of Americans in England, and he had kept up a cordial correspondence with Washington.

Old Lord Fairfax, the Nimrod of Greenway Court, Washington's early friend and patron, with whom he had first learned to follow the hounds, had lived on in a green old age at his sylvan

retreat in the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah; popular with his neighbors and unmolested by the Whigs, although frank and open in his adherence to Great Britain. He had attained his ninety-second year, when tidings of the surrender of Yorktown wounded the national pride of the old cavalier to the quick, and snapped the attenuated thread of his existence.*

The time was now approaching when the first general meeting of the Order of Cincinnati was to be held, and Washington saw with deep concern a popular jealousy awakened concerning it. Judge Burke, of South Carolina, had denounced it in a pamphlet as an attempt to elevate the military above the civil classes, and to institute an order of nobility. The Legislature of Massachusetts sounded an alarm that was echoed in Connecticut, and prolonged from State to State. The whole Union was put on its guard against this effort to form a hereditary aristocracy out of the military chiefs and powerful families of the several States.

Washington endeavored to allay this jealousy. In his letters to the presidents of the State societies, notifying the meeting which was to be held in Philadelphia on the 1st of May, he expressed his earnest solicitude that it should be respectable for

* So, at least, records in homely prose and verse a reverend historiographer of Mount Vernon. "When old Lord Fairfax heard that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black waiter, 'Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die!'"

Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And thus to bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

There oft he called on Britain's name,
And oft he wept full sore,
Then sighed—thy will, oh Lord, be done—
And word spake never more.

See WEEMS' *Life of Washington.*

numbers and abilities, and wise and deliberate in its proceedings, so as to convince the public that the objects of the institution were patriotic and trustworthy.

The society met at the appointed time and place. Washington presided, and by his sagacious counsels effected modifications of its constitution. The hereditary principle, and the power of electing honorary members, were abolished, and it was reduced to the harmless, but highly respectable footing on which it still exists.

In notifying the French military and naval officers included in the society of the changes which had taken place in its constitution, he expressed his ardent hopes that it would render permanent those friendships and connections which had happily taken root between the officers of the two nations. All clamors against the order now ceased. It became a rallying place for old comrades in arms, and Washington continued to preside over it until his death.

In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, for whom he felt an especial regard, after inviting him to the meeting, he adds: "I will only repeat to you the assurances of my friendship, and of the pleasure I should feel in seeing you in the shade of those trees which my hands have planted; and which, by their rapid growth, at once indicate a knowledge of my declining years, and their disposition to spread their mantles over me, before I go hence to return no more."

On the 17th of August he was gladdened by having the Marquis de Lafayette under his roof, who had recently arrived from France. The marquis passed a fortnight with him, a loved and cherished guest, at the end of which he departed for

a time, to be present at the ceremony of a treaty with the Indians.

Washington now prepared for a tour to the west of the Appalachian Mountains, to visit his lands on the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. Dr. Craik, the companion of his various campaigns, and who had accompanied him in 1770 on a similar tour, was to be his fellow-traveller. The way they were to travel may be gathered from Washington's directions to the doctor:—"You will have occasion to take nothing from home but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper to make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either at my place on the Youghiogheny or Fort Pitt, measures for this purpose having already been taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want."

This soldier-like tour, made in hardy military style, with tent, pack-horses, and frugal supplies, took him once more among the scenes of his youthful expeditions when a land surveyor in the employ of Lord Fairfax; a leader of Virginia militia, or an aide-de-camp of the unfortunate Braddock. A veteran now in years, and a general renowned in arms, he soberly permitted his steed to pick his way across the mountains by the old military route, still called Braddock's Road, over which he had spurred in the days of youthful ardor. His original intention had been to survey and inspect his lands on the Monongahela River; then to descend the Ohio to the great Kanawha, where also he had large tracts of wild land. On arriving on the Monongahela, however, he heard such accounts of discontent and irritation among the Indian tribes, that he did not consider it prudent to venture

among them. Some of his land on the Monongahela was settled; the rest was in the wilderness, and of little value in the present unquiet state of the country. He abridged his tour, therefore; proceeded no further west than the Monongahela; ascended that river, and then struck southward through the wild, unsettled regions of the Alleganies, until he came out into the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton. He returned to Mount Vernon on the 4th of October; having, since the 1st of September, travelled on horseback six hundred and eighty miles, for a great part of the time in wild, mountainous country, where he was obliged to encamp at night. This, like his tour to the northern forts with Governor Clinton, gave proof of his unfailing vigor and activity.

During all this tour he had carefully observed the course and character of the streams flowing from the west into the Ohio, and the distance of their navigable parts from the head navigation of the rivers east of the mountains, with the nearest and best portage between them. For many years he had been convinced of the practicability of an easy and short communication between the Potomac and James rivers, and the waters of the Ohio, and thence on to the great chain of lakes; and of the vast advantages that would result therefrom to the States of Virginia and Maryland. He had even attempted to set a company on foot to undertake at their own expense the opening of such a communication, but the breaking out of the Revolution had put a stop to the enterprise. One object of his recent tour was to make observations and collect information on the subject; and all that he had seen and heard quickened his solicitude to carry the scheme into effect.

Political as well as commercial interests, he conceived, were

involved in the enterprise. He had noticed that the flanks and rear of the United States were possessed by foreign and formidable powers, who might lure the western people into a trade and alliance with them. The Western States, he observed, stood as it were upon a pivot, so that the touch of a feather might turn them any way. They had looked down the Mississippi, and been tempted in that direction by the facilities of sending every thing down the stream; whereas they had no means of coming to us but by long land transportations and rugged roads. The jealous and untoward disposition of the Spaniards, it was true, almost barred the use of the Mississippi; but they might change their policy, and invite trade in that direction. The retention by the British government, also, of the posts of Detroit, Niagara and Oswego, though contrary to the spirit of the treaty, shut up the channel of trade in that quarter. These posts, however, would eventually be given up; and then, he was persuaded, the people of New York would lose no time in removing every obstacle in the way of a water communication; and "I shall be mistaken," said he, "if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of coasting on either side."

It behooved Virginia, therefore, to lose no time in availing herself of the present favorable conjuncture to secure a share of western trade by connecting the Potomac and James Rivers, with the waters beyond the mountains. The industry of the western settlers had hitherto been checked by the want of outlets to their products, owing to the before-mentioned obstacles: "But smooth the road," said he, "and make easy the way for them, and then see what an influx of articles will pour upon us; how amazingly our exports will be increased by them, and how amply all

shall be compensated for any trouble and expense we may encounter to effect it."

Such were some of the ideas ably and amply set forth by him in a letter to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, who, struck with his plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, laid the letter before the State legislature. The favor with which it was received induced Washington to repair to Richmond and give his personal support to the measure. He arrived there on the 15th of November. On the following morning a committee of five members of the House of Assembly, headed by Patrick Henry, waited on him in behalf of that body, to testify their reverence for his character and affection for his person, and their sense of the proofs given by him since his return to private life, that no change of situation could turn his thoughts from the welfare of his country. The suggestions of Washington in his letter to the governor, and his representations, during this visit to Richmond, gave the first impulse to the great system of internal improvement since pursued throughout the United States.

At Richmond he was joined by the Marquis de Lafayette; who since their separation had accompanied the commissioners to Fort Schuyler, and been present at the formation of a treaty with the Indians; after which he had made a tour of the Eastern States, "crowned every where," writes Washington, "with wreaths of love and respect."*

They returned together to Mount Vernon, where Lafayette again passed several days, a cherished inmate of the domestic circle.

* Letter of Washington to the Marchioness de Lafayette.

When his visit was ended, Washington, to defer the parting scene, accompanied him to Annapolis. On returning to Mount Vernon, he wrote a farewell letter to the marquis, bordering more upon the sentimental than almost any other in his multifarious correspondence.

"In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I have travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to answer no, my fears answered yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently, to my prospect of ever seeing you again."

CHAPTER XXXV.

SCHEME OF INLAND NAVIGATION—SHARES OF STOCK OFFERED TO WASHINGTON—DECLINED—RURAL IMPROVEMENTS—THE TAX OF LETTER-WRITING—THE TAX OF SITTING FOR LIKENESSES—ORNAMENTAL GARDENING—MANAGEMENT OF THE ESTATE—DOMESTIC LIFE—VISIT OF MR. WATSON—REVERENTIAL AWE INSPIRED BY WASHINGTON—IRKSOME TO HIM—INSTANCES OF HIS FESTIVE GAYETY—OF HIS LAUGHING—PASSION FOR HUNTING REVIVED—DEATH OF GENERAL GREENE—HIS CHARACTER—WASHINGTON'S REGRETS AND ENCOMIUMS—LETTERS TO THE FRENCH NOBLEMEN.

WASHINGTON'S zeal for the public good had now found a new channel; or, rather, his late tours into the interior of the Union had quickened ideas long existing in his mind on the subject of internal navigation. In a letter to Richard Henry Lee, recently chosen President of Congress, he urged it upon his attention; suggesting that the western waters should be explored, their navigable capabilities ascertained, and that a complete map should be made of the country; that in all grants of land by the United States, there should be a reserve made for special sale of all mines, mineral and salt springs; that a medium price should be adopted for the western lands sufficient to prevent monopoly, but not to discourage useful settlers. He had a salutary horror of "land jobbers" and "roaming speculators," prowling about the country like wolves; marking and surveying valuable spots

to the great disquiet of the Indian tribes. "The spirit of emigration is great," said he; "people have got impatient, and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either."

In the latter part of December he was at Annapolis, at the request of the Assembly of Virginia, to arrange matters with the Assembly of Maryland respecting the communication between the Potomac and the western waters. Through his indefatigable exertions two companies were formed under the patronage of the governments of these States, for opening the navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers, and he was appointed president of both. By a unanimous vote of the Assembly of Virginia, fifty shares in the Potomac, and one hundred in the James River company, were appropriated for his benefit, to the end that, while the great works he had promoted would remain monuments of his glory, they might also be monuments of the gratitude of his country. The aggregate amount of these shares was about forty thousand dollars.

Washington was exceedingly embarrassed by the appropriation. To decline so noble and unequivocal a testimonial of the good opinion and good will of his countrymen, might be construed into disrespect, yet he wished to be perfectly free to exercise his judgment and express his opinions in the matter, without being liable to the least suspicion of interested motives. It had been his fixed determination, also, when he surrendered his military command, never to hold any other office under government to which emolument might become a necessary appendage. From this resolution his mind had never swerved.

While, however, he declined to receive the proffered shares

for his own benefit, he intimated a disposition to receive them in trust, to be applied to the use of some object or institution of a public nature. His wishes were complied with, and the shares were ultimately appropriated by him to institutions devoted to public education. Yet, though the love for his country would thus interfere with his love for his home, the dream of rural retirement at Mount Vernon still went on.

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs," he says, in a letter to a friend in England, "the better I am pleased with them; insomuch that I can nowhere find so much satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. While indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect, how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vainglory that can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquest."

"How pitiful, in the age of reason and religion, is that false ambition which desolates the world with fire and sword for the purpose of conquest and fame, compared to the milder virtues of making our neighbors and our fellow-men as happy as their frail convictions and perishable natures will permit them to be."

He had a congenial correspondent in his quondam brother-soldier, Governor Clinton of New York, whose spear, like his own, had been turned into a pruning-hook.

"Whenever the season is proper and an opportunity offers," writes he to the governor, "I shall be glad to receive the balsam trees or others which you may think curious and exotic with us, as I am endeavoring to improve the grounds about my house in this way." He recommends to the governor's care certain grape-vines of the choicest kinds for the table, which an uncle of the Chevalier de Luzerne had engaged to send from France, and

which must be about to arrive at New York. He is literally going to sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and devote himself to the quiet pleasures of rural life.

At the opening of the year (1785) the entries in his diary show him diligently employed in preparations to improve his groves and shrubbery. On the 10th of January he notes that the white thorn is full in berry. On the 20th he begins to clear the pine groves of undergrowth.

In February he transplants ivy under the walls of the garden to which it still clings. In March he is planting hemlock trees, that most beautiful species of American evergreen, numbers of which had been brought hither from Occoquan. In April he is sowing holly berries in drills, some adjoining a green-briar hedge on the north side of the garden gate; others in a semicircle on the lawn. Many of the holly bushes thus produced, are still flourishing about the place in full vigor. He had learnt the policy, not sufficiently adopted in our country, of clothing his ornamented grounds as much as possible with evergreens, which resist the rigors of our winter, and keep up a cheering verdure throughout the year. Of the trees fitted for shade in pasture land he notes the locust, maple, black mulberry, black walnut, black gum, dogwood and sassafras, none of which, he observes, materially injure the grass beneath them.

Is then for once a soldier's dream realized? Is he in perfect enjoyment of that seclusion from the world and its distractions, which he had so often pictured to himself amid the hardships and turmoils of the camp? Alas, no! The "post," that "herald of a noisy world," invades his quiet and loads his table with letters, until correspondence becomes an intolerable burthen.

He looks in despair at the daily accumulating mass of unanswered letters. "Many mistakenly think," writes he, "that I am retired to ease, and to that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been obliged to write so much myself, as I have done since my retirement." * Again—"It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. It is references to old matters, with which I have nothing to do; applications which often cannot be complied with; inquiries which would require the pen of a historian to satisfy; letters of compliment as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business which employs my pen and my time often disagreeably. These, with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences."

From much of this drudgery of the pen he was subsequently relieved by Mr. Tobias Lear, a young gentleman of New Hampshire, a graduate of Harvard College, who acted as his private secretary, and at the same time took charge of the instruction of the two children of the late Mr. Parke Custis, whom Washington had adopted.

There was another tax imposed by his celebrity upon his time and patience. Applications were continually made to him to sit for his likeness. The following is his sportive reply to Mr. Francis Hopkinson, who applied in behalf of Mr. Pine:

"'*In for a penny in for a pound*,' is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painters' pencil, that I am altogether at their beck, and sit 'like Patience on a monument,'

* Letter to Richard Henry Lee.

whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill, than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yield a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine."

It was not long after this that M. Houdon, an artist of great merit, chosen by Mr. Jefferson and Dr. Franklin, arrived from Paris to make a study of Washington for a statue, for the Legislature of Virginia. He remained a fortnight at Mount Vernon, and having formed his model, took it with him to Paris, where he produced that excellent statue and likeness to be seen in the State House in Richmond, Virginia.

Being now in some measure relieved from the labors of the pen, Washington had more time to devote to his plan for ornamental cultivation of the grounds about his dwelling.

We find in his diary noted down with curious exactness, each day's labor and the share he took in it; his frequent rides to the Mill Swamp; the Dogue Creek; the "Plantation of the Neck," and other places along the Potomac in quest of young elms, ash trees, white thorn, crab-apples, maples, mulberries, willows and lilacs; the winding walks which he lays out, and the trees and shrubs which he plants along them. Now he sows acorns and buck-eye nuts brought by himself from the Monongahela; now he opens vistas through the Pine Grove, commanding distant views through the woodlands; and now he twines round his columns scarlet honeysuckles, which his gardener tells him will blow all the summer.

His care-worn spirit freshens up in these employments. With him Mount Vernon is a kind of idyl. The transient glow of poetical feeling which once visited his bosom, when in boyhood he rhymed beneath its groves, seems about to return once more; and we please ourselves with noting among the trees set out by him, a group of young horse-chestnuts from Westmoreland, his native county, the haunt of his schoolboy days; which had been sent to him by Colonel Lee (Light Horse Harry), the son of his "Lowland Beauty."

A diagram of the plan in which he had laid out his grounds, still remains among his papers at Mount Vernon; the places are marked on it for particular trees and shrubs. Some of those trees and shrubs are still to be found in the places thus assigned to them. In the present neglected state of Mount Vernon, its walks are overgrown, and vegetation runs wild; but it is deeply interesting still to find traces of these toils in which Washington delighted, and to know that many of the trees which gave it its present umbrageous beauty were planted by his hand.

The ornamental cultivation of which we have spoken, was confined to the grounds appertaining to what was called the mansion-house farm; but his estate included four other farms, all lying contiguous, and containing three thousand two hundred and sixty acres; each farm having its bailiff or overseer, with a house for his accommodation, barns and out-houses for the produce, and cabins for the negroes. On a general map of the estate, drawn out by Washington himself, these farms were all laid down accurately and their several fields numbered; he knew the soil and local qualities of each, and regulated the culture of them accordingly.

In addition to these five farms there were several hundred

acres of fine woodland, so that the estate presented a beautiful diversity of land and water. In the stables near the mansion-house were the carriage and saddle horses, of which he was very choice; on the four farms there were 54 draught horses, 12 mules, 317 head of black cattle, 360 sheep, and a great number of swine, which last ran at large in the woods.

He now read much on husbandry and gardening, and copied out treatises on those subjects. He corresponded also with the celebrated Arthur Young; from whom he obtained seeds of all kinds, improved ploughs, plans for laying out farm yards, and advice on various parts of rural economy.

"Agriculture," writes he to him, "has ever been among the most favored of my amusements, though I have never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years' total inattention to it has added nothing to a knowledge, which is best understood from practice; but with the means you have been so obliging as to furnish me, I shall return to it, though rather late in the day, with more alacrity than ever."

In the management of his estate he was remarkably exact. No negligence on the part of the overseers or those under them was passed over unnoticed. He seldom used many words on the subject of his plans; rarely asked advice; but, when once determined, carried them directly and silently into execution; and was not easily dissuaded from a project when once commenced.

We have shown, in a former chapter, his mode of apportioning time at Mount Vernon, prior to the Revolution. The same system was, in a great measure, resumed. His active day began some time before the dawn. Much of his correspondence was despatched before breakfast, which took place at half-past seven.

After breakfast he mounted his horse which stood ready at the door, and rode out to different parts of his estate, as he used to do to various parts of the camp, to see that all was right at the outposts, and every one at his duty. At half-past two he dined.

If there was no company he would write until dark, or, if pressed by business until nine o'clock in the evening; otherwise he read in the evening, or amused himself with a game of whist.

His secretary, Mr. Lear, after two years' residence in the family on the most confidential footing, says,—"General Washington is, I believe, almost the only man of an exalted character, who does not lose some part of his respectability by an intimate acquaintance. I have never found a single thing that could lessen my respect for him. A complete knowledge of his honesty, uprightness and candor in all his private transactions, has sometimes led me to think him more than a man."

The children of Parke Custis formed a lively part of his household. He was fond of children and apt to unbend with them. Miss Custis, recalling in after life the scenes of her childhood, writes, "I have sometimes made him laugh most heartily from sympathy with my joyous and extravagant spirits;" she observes, however, that "he was a silent, thoughtful man. He spoke little generally; never of himself. I never heard him relate a single act of his life during the war. I have often seen him perfectly abstracted, his lips moving; but no sound was perceptible."

An observant traveller, Mr. Elkanah Watson, who visited Mount Vernon in the winter of 1785, bearer of a letter of introduction from General Greene and Colonel Fitzgerald, gives a

home picture of Washington in his retirement. Though sure that his credentials would secure him a respectful reception, he says, "I trembled with awe, as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity, and with that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the character of a soldier and an eminent private gentleman. He soon put me at my ease, by unbending, in a free and affable conversation.

"The cautious reserve which wisdom and policy dictated, whilst engaged in rearing the glorious fabric of our independence, was evidently the result of consummate prudence and not characteristic of his nature. I observed a peculiarity in his smile, which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect.

"I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle; revered and beloved by all around him; agreeably social, without ostentation; delighting in anecdote and adventures; without assumption; his domestic arrangements harmonious and systematic. His servants seemed to watch his eye, and to anticipate his every wish; hence a look was equivalent to a command. His servant Billy, the faithful companion of his military career, was always at his side. Smiling content animated and beamed on every countenance in his presence."

In the evening Mr. Watson sat conversing for a full hour with Washington after all the family had retired, expecting, perhaps, to hear him fight over some of his battles; but, if so, he was disappointed, for he observes: "He modestly waived all allusions to the events in which he had acted so glorious and conspicuous a part. Much of his conversation had reference to the inte-

rior country, and to the opening of the navigation of the Potomac by canals and locks, at the Seneca, the Great and Little Falls. His mind appeared to be deeply absorbed by that object, then in earnest contemplation."

Mr. Watson had taken a severe cold in the course of a harsh winter journey, and coughed excessively. Washington pressed him to take some remedies, but he declined. After retiring for the night his coughing increased. "When some time had elapsed," writes he, "the door of my room was gently opened, and, on drawing my bed curtains, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression. This little incident, occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

The late Bishop White, in subsequent years, speaking of Washington's unassuming manners, observes: "I know no man who so carefully guarded against the discoursing of himself or of his acts, or of any thing that pertained to him; and it has occasionally occurred to me when in his company, that, if a stranger to his person were present, he would never have known from any thing said by him that he was conscious of having distinguished himself in the eye of the world."

An anecdote is told of Washington's conduct while commander-in-chief; illustrative of his benignant attention to others, and his freedom from all assumption. While the army was encamped at Morristown, he one day attended a religious meeting where divine service was to be celebrated in the open air. A chair had been set out for his use. Just before the service commenced, a woman with a child in her arms approached. All

the seats were occupied. Washington immediately rose, placed her in the chair which had been assigned to him, and remained standing during the whole service.*

The reverential awe with which his deeds and elevated position threw around him was often a source of annoyance to him in private life; especially when he perceived its effect upon the young and gay. We have been told of a case in point, when he made his appearance at a private ball where all were enjoying themselves with the utmost glee. The moment he entered the room the buoyant mirth was checked; the dance lost its animation; every face was grave; every tongue was silent. He remained for a time, endeavoring to engage in conversation with some of the young people, and to break the spell; finding it in vain, he retired sadly to the company of the elders in an adjoining room, expressing his regret that his presence should operate as such a damper. After a little while light laughter and happy voices again resounded from the ball-room; upon which he rose cautiously, approached on tip-toe the door, which was ajar, and there stood for some time a delighted spectator of the youthful revelry.

Washington in fact, though habitually grave and thoughtful, was of a social disposition, and loved cheerful society. He was fond of the dance; and it was the boast of many ancient dames in our day, who had been belles in the time of the Revolution, that they had danced minuets with him, or had him for a partner in contra-dances. There were balls in camp, in some of the dark times of the Revolution. "We had a little dance at my quarters," writes General Greene from Middlebrook, in March,

* MS. notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle.

1779. "His Excellency and Mrs. Greene danced upwards of three hours without once sitting down. Upon the whole, we had a pretty little frisk." *

A letter of Colonel Tench Tilghman, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, gives an instance of the general's festive gayety, when in the above year the army was cantoned near Morristown. A large company, of which the general and Mrs. Washington, general and Mrs. Greene, and Mr. and Mrs. Olney were part, dined with colonel and Mrs. Biddle. Some little time after the ladies had retired from table, Mr. Olney followed them into the next room. A clamor was raised against him as a deserter, and it was resolved that a party should be sent to demand him, and that if the ladies refused to give him up, he should be brought by force. Washington humored the joke, and offered to head the party. He led it with great formality to the door of the drawing-room, and sent in a summons. The ladies refused to give up the deserter. An attempt was made to capture him. The ladies came to the rescue. There was a melée; in the course of which his Excellency seems to have had a passage at arms with Mrs. Olney. The ladies were victorious, as they always ought to be, says the gallant Tilghman.†

More than one instance is told of Washington's being sur-

* Greene to Col. Wadsworth. MS.

† This sportive occurrence gave rise to a piece of camp scandal. It was reported at a distance that Mrs. Olney had been in a violent rage, and had told Washington that, "if he did not let go her hand she would tear his eyes out, and that though he was a general, he was but a man."

Mr. Olney wrote to Colonel Tilghman, begging him to refute the scandal. The latter gave a true statement of the affair, declaring that the whole was done in jest, and that in the mock contest Mrs. Olney had made use of no expressions unbecoming a lady of her good breeding, or such as were taken the least amiss by the general.

prised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war. We have recorded one produced by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback, with a female prisoner *en croupe*. The following is another which occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadocia of the army, vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. Washington gave his consent, and with some of his officers attended to see the horse receive his first lesson. After much preparation, the pretender to equitation mounted into the saddle and was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his forefeet, threw up his heels, and gave the unlucky Gambado a somerset over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter, that, we are told, the tears ran down his cheeks.*

Still another instance is given, which occurred at the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, and was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter. In that fit of laughter, it was sagely presumed that he threw off the burthen of care which had been weighing down his spirits throughout the war. He certainly relaxed much of his thoughtful gravity of demeanor when he had no longer the anxieties of a general command to harass him. The late Judge Brooke, who had served as an officer in the legion of Light-horse Harry, used to tell of having frequently met Washington on his visits to Fredericksburg after the revolu-

* Notes of the Rev. Mr. Tuttle. MS.

tionary war, and how "hilarious" the general was on those occasions with "Jack Willis, and other friends of his young days," laughing heartily at the comic songs which were sung at table.

Colonel Henry Lee, too, who used to be a favored guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem to have been much under the influence of that "reverential awe" which Washington is said to have inspired; if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair, general," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for any thing; and I must have full price for my horses."

NOTE.

Another instance is on record of one of Washington's fits of laughter, which occurred in subsequent years. Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the general, were on their way on horseback to visit Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. As they passed through a wood on the skirts of the Mount Vernon grounds, they were tempted to make a hasty toilet beneath its shade; being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dismounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau. As he opened it, out flew cakes of windsor soap and fancy articles of all kinds. The man by mistake had changed their portmanteau at the last stopping place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedlar. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter.—See *Life of Judge J. Smith.*

The bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh. The general took this familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part. "Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow," said he,—"see, that bird is laughing at you." *

Hearty laughter, however, was rare with Washington. The sudden explosions we hear of were the result of some sudden and ludicrous surprise. His general habit was a calm seriousness, easily softening into a benevolent smile.

In some few of his familiar letters, yet preserved, and not relating to business, there is occasionally a vein of pleasantry and even of humor; but almost invariably, they treat of matters of too grave import to admit of any thing of the kind. It is to be deeply regretted that most of his family letters have been purposely destroyed.

The passion for hunting had revived with Washington on returning to his old hunting-grounds; but he had no hounds. His kennel had been broken up when he went to the wars, and the dogs given away, and it was not easy to replace them. After a time he received several hounds from France, sent out by Lafayette and other of the French officers, and once more sallied forth to renew his ancient sport. The French hounds, however, proved indifferent; he was out with them repeatedly, putting other hounds with them borrowed from gentlemen of the neighborhood. They improved after a while, but were never stanch, and caused him frequent disappointments. Probably he was not as stanch himself as formerly; an interval of several years may have blunted his keenness, if we may judge from the following entry in his diary:

* Communicated to us in a letter from a son of Colonel Lee.

"Out after breakfast with my hounds, found a fox and ran him sometimes hard, and sometimes at cold hunting from 11 till near 2—when I came home and left the huntsmen with them, who followed in the same manner two hours or more, and then took the dogs off without killing."

He appears at one time to have had an idea of stocking part of his estate with deer. In a letter to his friend, George William Fairfax, in England, a letter expressive of kind recollections of former companionship, he says: "Though envy is no part of my composition, yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living, is enough to create a strong desire in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may. I am not a little obliged to you for contributing to this, by procuring me a buck and doe of the best English deer; but if you have not already been at this trouble, I would, my good sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle of Maryland has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his park of English deer at Bellair. With these, and tolerable care, I shall soon have a full stock for my small paddock.*

While Washington was thus calmly enjoying himself, came a letter from Henry Lee, who was now in Congress, conveying a mournful piece of intelligence: "Your friend and second, the

* George William Fairfax resided in Bath, where he died on the 3d of April, 1787, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though his income was greatly reduced by the confiscation of his property in Virginia, he contributed generously during the revolutionary war to the relief of American prisoners. —*Sparks' Washington's Writings*, v. ii., p. 53.

patriot and noble Greene, is no more. Universal grief reigns here." Greene died on the 18th of June, at his estate of Mulberry Grove, on Savannah River, presented to him by the State of Georgia. His last illness was brief; caused by a stroke of the sun; he was but forty-four years of age.

The news of his death struck heavily on Washington's heart, to whom, in the most arduous trials of the Revolution, he had been a second self. He had taken Washington as his model, and possessed naturally many of his great qualities. Like him, he was sound in judgment; persevering in the midst of discouragements; calm and self-possessed in time of danger; heedful of the safety of others; heedless of his own. Like him, he was modest and unpretending, and like him he had a perfect command of temper.

He had Washington's habits of early rising, and close and methodical despatch of business, "never suffering the day to crowd upon the morrow." In private intercourse he was frank, noble, candid and intelligent; in the hurry of business he was free from petulance, and had, we are told, "a winning blandness of manner that won the affections of his officers."

His campaigns in the Carolinas showed him to be a worthy disciple of Washington, keeping the war alive by his own persevering hope and inexhaustible energy, and, as it were, fighting almost without weapons. His great contest of generalship with the veteran Cornwallis, has ensured for him a lasting renown.

"He was a great and good man!" was Washington's comprehensive eulogy on him; and in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Greene's death is an event which has given such general concern, and is so much regretted by his numerous friends,

that I can scarce persuade myself to touch upon it, even so far as to say that in him you lost a man who affectionately regarded, and was a sincere admirer of you." *

Other deaths pressed upon Washington's sensibility about the same time. That of General McDougall, who had served his country faithfully through the war, and since with equal fidelity in Congress. That, too, of Colonel Tench Tilghman, for a long time one of Washington's aides-de-camp, and "who left," writes he, "as fair a reputation as ever belonged to a human character." "Thus," adds he, "some of the pillars of the Revolution fall. Others are mouldering by insensible degrees. May our country never want props to support the glorious fabric!"

In his correspondence about this time with several of the French noblemen who had been his associates in arms, his letters breathe the spirit of peace which was natural to him; for war with him had only been a matter of patriotism and public duty. To the Marquis de la Rouerie, who had so bravely but modestly fought under the title of Colonel Armand, he writes: "I never expect to draw my sword again. I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it. My time is now occupied by rural amusements in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is (although it is against the profession of arms, and would clip the wings of some of our young soldiers who are soaring after glory) to see the whole world in peace, and the inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind."

* We are happy to learn that a complete collection of the correspondence of General Greene is about to be published by his worthy and highly cultivated grandson, George Washington Greene. It is a work that, like Sparks' Writings of Washington, should form a part of every American library.

So, also, in a letter to Count Rochambeau, dated July 31st, 1786: "It must give pleasure," writes he, "to the friends of humanity, even in this distant section of the globe, to find that the clouds which threatened to burst in a storm of war on Europe, have dissipated, and left a still brighter horizon. * * * * * As the rage of conquest, which in times of barbarity stimulated nations to blood, has in a great measure ceased; as the objects which formerly gave birth to wars are daily diminishing; and as mankind are becoming more enlightened and humanized, I cannot but flatter myself with the pleasing prospect, that a more liberal policy and more pacific systems will take place amongst them. To indulge this idea affords a soothing consolation to a philanthropic mind; insomuch that, although it should be found an illusion, one would hardly wish to be divested of an error so grateful in itself and so innocent in its consequences."

And in another letter,—"It is thus, you see, my dear Count, in retirement upon my farm I speculate upon the fate of nations, amusing myself with innocent reveries that mankind will one day grow happier and better."

How easily may the wisest of men be deceived in their speculations as to the future, especially when founded on the idea of the perfectibility of human nature. These halcyon dreams of universal peace were indulged on the very eve, as it were, of the French Revolution, which was to deluge the world in blood, and when the rage for conquest was to have unbounded scope under the belligerent sway of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WASHINGTON DOUBTS THE SOLIDITY OF THE CONFEDERATION—CORRESPONDENCE WITH JOHN JAY ON THE SUBJECT—PLAN OF A CONVENTION OF ALL THE STATES TO REVISE THE FEDERAL SYSTEM—WASHINGTON HEADS THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION—INSURRECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS—THE CONVENTION—A FEDERAL CONSTITUTION ORGANIZED—RATIFIED.

From his quiet retreat of Mount Vernon, Washington, though ostensibly withdrawn from public affairs, was watching with intense solicitude the working together of the several parts in the great political confederacy; anxious to know whether the thirteen distinct States, under the present organization, could form a sufficiently efficient general government. He was daily becoming more and more doubtful of the solidity of the fabric he had assisted to raise. The form of confederation which had bound the States together and met the public exigencies during the Revolution, when there was a pressure of external danger, was daily proving more and more incompetent to the purposes of a national government. Congress had devised a system of credit to provide for the national expenditure and the extinction of the national debts, which amounted to something more than forty millions of dollars. The system experienced neglect from some States and opposition from others; each consulting its local interests and prejudices, instead of the interests and obligations of the

whole. In like manner treaty stipulations, which bound the good faith of the whole, were slighted, if not violated by individual States, apparently unconscious that they must each share in the discredit thus brought upon the national name.

In a letter to James Warren, who had formerly been President of the Massachusetts provincial Congress, Washington writes: "The confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body; their ordinances being little attended to. To me it is a solecism in politics; indeed, it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation (who are creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action and may be recalled at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing) sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness." *

Not long previous to the writing of this letter, Washington had been visited at Mount Vernon by commissioners, who had been appointed by the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland to form a compact relative to the navigation of the rivers Potomac and Pocomoke, and of part of the Chesapeake Bay, and who had met at Alexandria for the purpose. During their visit at Mount

* Sparks, ix. 139.

Vernon, the policy of maintaining a naval force on the Chesapeake, and of establishing a tariff of duties on imports to which the laws of both States should conform, was discussed, and it was agreed, that the commissioners should propose to the governments of their respective States the appointment of other commissioners, with powers to make conjoint arrangements for the above purposes; to which the assent of Congress was to be solicited.

The idea of conjoint arrangements between States, thus suggested in the quiet councils of Mount Vernon, was a step in the right direction, and will be found to lead to important results.

From a letter, written two or three months subsequently, we gather some of the ideas on national policy which were occupying Washington's mind. "I have ever been a friend to adequate powers in Congress, without which it is evident to me we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe.—We are either a united people under one head and for federal purposes, or we are thirteen independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other.—If the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority.—I can foresee no evil greater than disunion; than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say unreasonable, because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils for the prevention of real ones." *

* See Letter to James McHenry. Sparks, ix. 121.

An earnest correspondence took place some months subsequently between Washington and the illustrious patriot, John Jay, at that time Secretary of Foreign Affairs, wherein the signs of the times were feelingly discussed.

"Our affairs," writes Jay, "seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them. * * * * * * * What I most fear is, that the better kind of people, by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances, will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of public faith and rectitude, to consider the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive. A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm." Washington, in reply, coincided in opinion that public affairs were drawing rapidly to a crisis, and he acknowledged the event to be equally beyond his foresight. "We have errors," said he, "to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging, somewhere, a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner, as the authority of the

State governments extends over the several States. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments must they not mingle frequently with the mass of the citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

"What then is to be done? things cannot go on in the same strain for ever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. * * * * I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

"Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I

cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

"Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight in the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy, in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present."

His anxiety on this subject was quickened by accounts of discontents and commotions in the Eastern States produced by the pressure of the times, the public and private indebtedness, and the imposition of heavy taxes, at a moment of financial embarrassment.

General Knox, now Secretary at War, who had been sent by Congress to Massachusetts to inquire into these troubles, thus writes about the insurgents: "Their creed is, that the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of *all*, and therefore ought to be *the common property of all*, and he that attempts opposition to this creed, is an enemy to equity and justice, and ought to be swept from off the face of the earth." Again: "They are determined to annihilate all debts, public and private, and have agrarian laws, which are easily effected by the means of unfunded paper, which shall be a tender in all cases whatever."

In reply to Colonel Henry Lee in Congress, who had addressed several letters to him on the subject, Washington writes: "You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, or, if attainable, that it would be a proper

remedy for the disorders. *Influence* is not *government.* Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once. There is a call for decision. Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them, if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it at the moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, *all* will be convinced that the superstructure is bad and wants support. To delay one or other of these expedients, is to exasperate on the one hand, or to give confidence on the other. * * * * Let the reins of government, then, be braced and held with a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended; but not suffered to be trampled upon whilst it has an existence."

A letter to him from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, dated New Haven, November 1st, says: "The troubles in Massachusetts still continue. Government is prostrated in the dust, and it is much to be feared that there is not energy enough in that State to re-establish the civil powers. The leaders of the mob, whose fortunes and measures are desperate, are strengthening themselves daily; and it is expected that they will soon take possession of the Continental magazine at Springfield, in which there are from ten to fifteen thousand stand of arms in excellent order.

"A general want of compliance with the requisitions of Congress for money seems to prognosticate that we are rapidly advancing to a crisis. Congress, I am told, are seriously alarmed, and hardly know which way to turn or what to expect. Indeed,

my dear General, nothing but a good Providence can extricate us from the present convulsion.

"In case of civil discord, I have already told you it was seriously my opinion that you could not remain neuter, and that you would be obliged, in self-defence, to take one part or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion."

Close upon the receipt of this letter, came intelligence that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress which had been offered by their general court, were still acting in open violation of law and government; and that the chief magistrate had been obliged to call upon the militia of the State to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God! is man," writes Washington, "that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It was but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live; constitutions of our own choice and making; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream."

His letters to Knox show the trouble of his mind. "I feel, my dear General Knox, infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who, besides a tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them? I do assure you that, even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present prospect of our affairs, it seems to me to be like the vision of a dream. * * * * After what I have seen, or rather what I have heard, I shall be surprised at nothing; for, if three years since, any person had told me that

there would have been such a formidable rebellion as exists at this day against the laws and constitution of our own making, I should have thought him a bedlamite, a fit subject for a madhouse. * * * In regretting, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend, General Greene, I have accompanied it of late with a query, whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which, it is more than probable, many of his compatriots may live to bemoan."

To James Madison, also, he writes in the same strain. "How melancholy is the reflection, that in so short a time we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the predictions of our transatlantic foes! 'Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance and the arts of self-interested and designing, disaffected and desperate characters, to involve this great country in wretchedness and contempt? What stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our government than these disorders? If there is not power in it to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty, or property? To you, I am sure I need not add aught on the subject. The consequences of a lax or inefficient government are too obvious to be dwelt upon. Thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas, a liberal and energetic constitution, well checked and well watched, to prevent encroachments, might restore us to that degree of respectability and consequence to which we had the fairest prospect of attaining."

Thus Washington, even though in retirement, was almost un-

consciously exercising a powerful influence on national affairs; no longer the soldier, he was now becoming the statesman. The opinions and counsels given in his letters were widely effective. The leading expedient for federate organization, mooted in his conferences with the commissioners of Maryland and Virginia, during their visit to Mount Vernon in the previous year, had been extended and ripened in legislative Assemblies, and ended in a plan of a convention composed of delegates from all the States, to meet in Philadelphia for the sole and express purpose of revising the federal system, and correcting its defects; the proceedings of the convention to be subsequently reported to Congress, and the several Legislatures, for approval and confirmation.

Washington was unanimously put at the head of the Virginia delegation; but for some time objected to accept the nomination. He feared to be charged with inconsistency in again appearing in a public situation, after his declared resolution to the contrary. "It will have also," said he, "a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so much desired by me, and so essentially necessary." * Beside, he had just avowed his intention of resigning the presidency of the Cincinnati Society, which was to hold its triennial meeting in May, in Philadelphia, and he could not appear at the same time and place on any other occasion, without giving offence to his worthy companions in arms, the late officers of the American army.

These considerations were strenuously combated, for the weight and influence of his name and counsel were felt to be all-

* Letter to Edmund Randolph, governor of Virginia.

important in giving dignity to the delegation. Two things contributed to bring him to a favorable decision: First, an insinuation that the opponents of the convention were monarchists, who wished the distractions of the country should continue, until a monarchical government might be resorted to as an ark of safety. The other was the insurrection in Massachusetts.

Having made up his mind to serve as a delegate to the convention, he went into a course of preparatory reading on the history and principles of ancient and modern confederacies. An abstract of the general principles of each, with notes of their vices or defects, exists in his own handwriting, among his papers; though it is doubted by a judicious commentator* whether it was originally drawn up by him, as several works are cited, which are written in languages that he did not understand.

Before the time arrived for the meeting of the convention, which was the second Monday in May, his mind was relieved from one source of poignant solicitude, by learning that the insurrection in Massachusetts had been suppressed with but little bloodshed, and that the principals had fled to Canada. He doubted, however, the policy of the Legislature of that State in disfranchising a large number of its citizens for their rebellious conduct; thinking more lenient measures might have produced as good an effect, without entirely alienating the affections of the people from the government; beside depriving some of them of the means of gaining a livelihood.

On the 9th of May, Washington set out in his carriage from Mount Vernon to attend the convention. At Chester, where he arrived on the 13th, he was met by General Mifflin, now speaker

* Mr. Sparks. For this interesting document see Writings of Washington, vol. ix. Appendix, No. iv.

of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Generals Knox and Varnum, Colonel Humphreys, and other personages of note. At Gray's Ferry the city light-horse were in attendance, by whom he was escorted into Philadelphia

It was not until the 25th of May that a sufficient number of delegates were assembled to form a quorum; when they proceeded to organize the body, and by a unanimous vote Washington was called up to the chair as President.

The following anecdote is recorded by Mr. Leigh Pierce, who was a delegate from Georgia. When the convention first opened, there were a number of propositions brought forward as great leading principles of the new government to be established. A copy of them was given to each member with an injunction of profound secrecy. One morning a member, by accident, dropped his copy of the propositions. It was luckily picked up by General Mifflin, and handed to General Washington, who put it in his pocket. After the debates of the day were over, and the question for adjournment was called for, Washington rose, and previous to putting the question, addressed the committee as follows: "Gentlemen, I am sorry to find that some one member of this body has been so neglectful of the secrets of the convention, as to drop in the State House a copy of their proceedings; which, by accident, was picked up and delivered to me this morning. I must entreat gentlemen to be more careful, lest our transactions get into the newspapers, and disturb the public repose by premature speculations. I know not whose paper it is, but there it is (throwing it down on the table); let him who owns it take it." At the same time he bowed, took his hat, and left the room with a dignity so severe that every person seemed alarmed. "For my part, I was extremely so," adds Mr. Pierce,

"for, putting my hand in my pocket, I missed my copy of the same paper; but advancing to the table, my fears soon dissipated. I found it to be in the handwriting of another person."

Mr. Pierce found his copy at his lodgings, in the pocket of a coat which he had changed that morning. No person ever ventured to claim the anonymous paper.

We forbear to go into the voluminous proceedings of this memorable convention, which occupied from four to seven hours each day for four months; and in which every point was the subject of able and scrupulous discussion by the best talent, and noblest spirits of the country. Washington felt restrained by his situation as President, from taking a part in the debates, but his well-known opinions influenced the whole. The result was the formation of the constitution of the United States, which (with some amendments made in after years) still exists.

As the members on the last day of the session were signing the engrossed constitution, Dr. Franklin, looking towards the President's chair, at the back of which a sun was painted, observed to those persons next to him, "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears at to its issue, looked at that sun behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun." *

"The business being closed," says Washington in his diary (Sept. 17), "the members adjourned to the city tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other. After which I returned to my lodgings, did some business with, and received

* The Madison Papers, iii. 1624.

the papers from, the secretary of the convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous work which had been executed."

"It appears to me little short of a miracle," writes he to Lafayette, "that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manners, circumstances and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I such an enthusiastic, partial, or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real, though not radical defects. With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole machine must move, my creed is simply, First, that the general government is not invested with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

"Secondly, that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will for ever arise from, and at short, stated intervals recur to, the free suffrages of the people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals."

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in

the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America, be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration."

The constitution thus formed, was forwarded to Congress, and thence transmitted to the State Legislatures, each of which submitted it to a State convention composed of delegates chosen for that express purpose by the people. The ratification of the instrument by nine States was necessary to carry it into effect; and as the several State conventions would assemble at different times, nearly a year must elapse before the decisions of the requisite number could be obtained.

During this time, Washington resumed his retired life at Mount Vernon, seldom riding, as he says, beyond the limits of his own farms, but kept informed by his numerous correspondents, such as James Madison, John Jay, and Generals Knox, Lincoln and Armstrong, of the progress of the constitution through its various ordeals, and of the strenuous opposition which it met with in different quarters; both in debate and through the press. A diversity of opinions and inclinations on the subject had been expected by him. "The various passions and motives by which men are influenced," said he, "are concomitants of fallibility, and ingrafted into our nature." Still he never had a doubt that it would ultimately be adopted; and, in fact, the national decision in its favor was more fully and strongly pronounced than even he had anticipated.

His feelings on learning the result were expressed with that solemn and religious faith in the protection of heaven, manifested by him in all the trials and vicissitudes through which his country had passed. "We may," said he, "with a kind of pious and

grateful exultation, trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events, which first induced the States to appoint a general convention, and then led them, one after another, by such steps as were best calculated to effect the object, into an adoption of the system recommended by the general convention; thereby, in all human probability, laying a lasting foundation for tranquillity and happiness, when we had but too much reason to fear, that confusion and misery were coming rapidly upon us." *

The testimonials of ratification having been received by Congress from a sufficient number of States, an act was passed by that body on the 13th of September, appointing the first Wednesday in January, 1789, for the people of the United States to choose electors of a President according to the constitution, and the first Wednesday in the month of February following for the electors to meet and make a choice. The meeting of the government was to be on the first Wednesday in March, and in the city of New York.

* Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, 20th July, 1788.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WASHINGTON TALKED OF FOR THE PRESIDENCY—HIS LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT EXPRESSING HIS RELUCTANCE—HIS ELECTION—HIS PROGRESS TO THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT—HIS RECEPTION AT NEW YORK—THE INAUGURATION.

The adoption of the Federal constitution was another epoch in the life of Washington. Before the official forms of an election could be carried into operation, a unanimous sentiment throughout the Union pronounced him the nation's choice to fill the presidential chair. He looked forward to the possibility of his election with characteristic modesty and unfeigned reluctance; as his letters to his confidential friends bear witness. "It has no fascinating allurements for me," writes he to Lafayette. "At my time of life and under my circumstances, the increasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest man on my own farm. Let those follow the pursuits of ambition and fame who have a keener relish for them, or who may have more years in store for the enjoyment."

Colonel Henry Lee had written to him warmly and eloquently on the subject. "My anxiety is extreme that the new government may have an auspicious beginning. To effect this and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is cer-

tain that again you will be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then to be sure you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, gave to the lot of one man. It is my belief, it is my anxious hope, that this will be the case."

"The event to which you allude may never happen," replies Washington. "This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definitive and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed as to believe me uninfluenced by sinister motives, in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed to myself indispensable.

"Should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends; might I not, after the declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart), in the judgment of the impartial world and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require, that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good

opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue.

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country and myself, I should despise all the party clamor and unjust censure, which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

"If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had less pretence and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself."

In a letter to Colonel Alexander Hamilton he writes: "In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been able to place it, I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must ere long, be called upon to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion, though I have lit-

tle expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me, that, if I should receive the appointment, and, if I should be prevailed upon to accept it, the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the public weal, in hopes that, at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with, and that I might be permitted once more to retire, to pass an unclouded evening, after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestic tranquillity."

To Lafayette he declares that his difficulties increase and multiply as he draws toward the period when, according to common belief, it will be necessary for him to give a definitive answer as to the office in question.

"Should circumstances render it in a manner inevitably necessary to be in the affirmative," writes he, "I shall assume the task with the most unfeigned reluctance, and with a real diffidence, for which I shall probably receive no credit from the world. If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which if pursued will ensure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path clear and direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry, and frugality, are necessary to make

us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs, and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to co-operate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

The election took place at the appointed time, and it was soon ascertained that Washington was chosen President for the term of four years from the 4th of March. By this time the arguments and entreaties of his friends, and his own convictions of public expediency, had determined him to accept; and he made preparations to depart for the seat of government, as soon as he should receive official notice of his election. Among other duties, he paid a visit to his mother at Fredericksburg; it was a painful, because likely to be a final one, for she was afflicted with a malady which, it was evident, must soon terminate her life. Their parting was affectionate, but solemn; she had always been reserved and moderate in expressing herself in regard to the successes of her son; but it must have been a serene satisfaction at the close of her life to see him elevated by his virtues to the highest honor of his country.

From a delay in forming a quorum of Congress the votes of the electoral college were not counted until early in April, when they were found to be unanimous in favor of Washington. "The delay," said he, "in a letter to General Knox, "may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (with the *world* it would obtain little credit), that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit, who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities and inclina-

tion, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage; but what returns will be made for them, heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men; for of the consolations, which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

At length, on the 14th of April, he received a letter from the president of Congress, duly notifying him of his election; and he prepared to set out immediately for New York, the seat of government. An entry in his diary, dated the 16th, says, "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

At the first stage of his journey a trial of his tenderest feelings awaited him in a public dinner given him at Alexandria, by his neighbors and personal friends, among whom he had lived in the constant interchange of kind offices, and who were so aware of the practical beneficence of his private character. A deep feeling of regret mingled with their festivity. The mayor, who presided, and spoke the sentiments of the people of Alexandria, deplored in his departure the loss of the first and best of their citizens, the ornament of the aged, the model of the young, the improver of their agriculture; the friend of their commerce, the protector of their infant academy, the benefactor of their poor,— but "go," added he, "and make a grateful people happy, who

will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this new sacrifice for their interests."

Washington was too deeply affected for many words in reply. "Just after having bade adieu to my domestic connections," said he, "this tender proof of your friendship is but too well calculated to awaken still further my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life. All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the care of that beneficent Being, who, on a former occasion, happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. But words fail me. Unutterable sensations must, then, be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart I bid all my affectionate friends and kind neighbors farewell!"

His progress to the seat of government was a continual ovation. The ringing of bells and roaring of cannonry proclaimed his course through the country. The old and young, women and children, thronged the highways to bless and welcome him. Deputations of the most respectable inhabitants from the principal places came forth to meet and escort him. At Baltimore, on his arrival and departure, his carriage was attended by a numerous cavalcade of citizens, and he was saluted by the thunder of artillery.

At the frontier of Pennsylvania he was met by his former companion in arms, Mifflin, now governor of the State, who with Judge Peters and a civil and military escort, was waiting to receive him. Washington had hoped to be spared all military parade, but found it was not to be evaded. At Chester, where he stopped to breakfast, there were preparations for a public entrance into Philadelphia. Cavalry had assembled from the sur-

rounding country; a superb white horse was led out for Washington to mount, and a grand procession set forward, with General St. Clair of revolutionary notoriety at its head. It gathered numbers as it advanced; passed under triumphal arches entwined with laurel, and entered Philadelphia amid the shouts of the multitude.

A day of public festivity succeeded, ended by a display of fireworks. Washington's reply to the congratulations of the mayor at a great civic banquet, spoke the genuine feelings of his modest nature, amid these testimonials of a world's applause. "When I contemplate the interposition of Providence, as it was visibly manifested in guiding us through the Revolution, in preparing us for the reception of the general government, and in conciliating the good will of the people of America toward one another after its adoption, I feel myself oppressed and almost overwhelmed with a sense of divine munificence. I feel that nothing is due to my personal agency in all those wonderful and complicated events, except what can be attributed to an honest zeal for the good of my country."

We question whether any of these testimonials of a nation's gratitude affected Washington more sensibly than those he received at Trenton. It was on a sunny afternoon when he arrived on the banks of the Delaware, where, twelve years before, he had crossed in darkness and storm, through clouds of snow and drifts of floating ice, on his daring attempt to strike a blow at a triumphant enemy.

Here at present all was peace and sunshine, the broad river flowed placidly along, and crowds awaited him on the opposite bank, to hail him with love and transport.

We will not dwell on the joyous ceremonials with which he

was welcomed, but there was one too peculiar to be omitted. The reader may remember Washington's gloomy night on the banks of the Assunpink, which flows through Trenton; the camp fires of Cornwallis in front of him; the Delaware full of floating ice in the rear; and his sudden resolve on that midnight retreat which turned the fortunes of the campaign. On the bridge crossing that eventful stream, the ladies of Trenton had caused a triumphal arch to be erected. It was entwined with evergreens and laurels, and bore the inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters." At this bridge the matrons of the city were assembled to pay him reverence; and as he passed under the arch, a number of young girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, strewed flowers before him, singing an ode expressive of their love and gratitude. Never was ovation more graceful, touching and sincere; and Washington, tenderly affected, declared that the impression of it on his heart could never be effaced.

His whole progress through New Jersey must have afforded a similar contrast to his weary marchings to and fro, harassed by doubts and perplexities, with bale fires blazing on its hills, instead of festive illuminations, and when the ringing of bells and booming of cannon, now so joyous, were the signals of invasion and maraud.

In respect to his reception at New York, Washington had signified in a letter to Governor Clinton, that none could be so congenial to his feelings as a quiet entry devoid of ceremony; but his modest wishes were not complied with. At Elizabethtown Point, a committee of both Houses of Congress, with various civic functionaries, waited by appointment to receive him. He embarked on board of a splendid barge, constructed for the

occasion. It was manned by thirteen branch pilots, masters of vessels, in white uniforms, and commanded by Commodore Nicholson. Other barges fancifully decorated followed, having on board the heads of departments and other public officers, and several distinguished citizens. As they passed through the strait between the Jerseys and Staten Island, called the Kills, other boats decorated with flags fell in their wake, until the whole, forming a nautical procession, swept up the broad and beautiful bay of New York, to the sound of instrumental music. On board of two vessels were parties of ladies and gentlemen who sang congratulatory odes as Washington's barge approached. The ships at anchor in the harbor, dressed in colors, fired salutes as it passed. One alone, the Galveston, a Spanish man-of-war, displayed no signs of gratulation, until the barge of the general was nearly abreast; when suddenly as if by magic, the yards were manned, the ship burst forth, as it were, into a full array of flags and signals, and thundered a salute of thirteen guns.

He approached the landing place of Murray's Wharf, amid the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannonry, and the shouting of multitudes collected on every pier-head. On landing, he was received by Governor Clinton. General Knox, too, who had taken such affectionate leave of him on his retirement from military life, was there to welcome him in his civil capacity. Other of his fellow-soldiers of the Revolution were likewise there, mingled with the civic dignitaries. At this juncture, an officer stepped up and requested Washington's orders, announcing himself as commanding his guard. Washington desired him to proceed according to the directions he might have received in the present arrangements, but that for the future the affection of his fellow-citizens was all the guard he wanted.

Carpets had been spread to a carriage prepared to convey him to his destined residence, but he preferred to walk. He was attended by a long civil and military train. In the streets through which he passed the houses were decorated with flags, silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens, and bore his name in every form of ornament. The streets were crowded with people, so that it was with difficulty a passage could be made by the city officers. Washington frequently bowed to the multitude as he passed, taking off his hat to the ladies, who thronged every window, waving their handkerchiefs, throwing flowers before him, and many of them shedding tears of enthusiasm.

That day he dined with his old friend Governor Clinton, who had invited a numerous company of public functionaries and foreign diplomatists to meet him, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

Would the reader know the effect upon Washington's mind of this triumphant entry into New York? It was to depress rather than to excite him. Modestly diffident of his abilities to cope with the new duties on which he was entering, he was overwhelmed by what he regarded as proofs of public expectation. Noting in his diary the events of the day, he writes: "The display of boats which attended and joined us on this occasion, some with vocal and some with instrumental music on board; the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the skies, as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (considering the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they are pleasing."

The inauguration was delayed for several days in which a

question arose as to the form or title by which the President elect was to be addressed; and a committee in both Houses was appointed to report upon the subject. The question was stated without Washington's privity, and contrary to his desire; as he feared that any title might awaken the sensitive jealousy of republicans, at a moment when it was all-important to conciliate public good-will to the new form of government. It was a relief to him, therefore, when it was finally resolved that the address should be simply "the President of the United States," without any additon of title; a judicious form which has remained to the present day.

The inauguration took place on the 30th of April. At nine o'clock in the morning, there were religious services in all the churches, and prayers put up for the blessing of Heaven on the new government. At twelve o'clock the city troops paraded before Washington's door, and soon after the committees of Congress and heads of departments came in their carriages. At half-past twelve the procession moved forward, preceded by the troops, next came the committees and heads of departments in their carriages; then Washington in a coach of state, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, and his secretary, Mr. Lear, in his own carriage. The foreign ministers and a long train of citizens brought up the rear.

About two hundred yards before reaching the hall, Washington and his suite alighted from their carriages, and passed through the troops, who were drawn up on each side, into the hall and senate chamber, where the Vice President, the Senate and House of Representatives were assembled. The Vice President, John Adams, recently inaugurated, advanced and conducted Washington to a chair of state at the upper end of the

room. A solemn silence prevailed; when the Vice President rose, and informed him that all things were prepared for him to take the oath of office required by the constitution.

The oath was to be administered by the Chancellor of the State of New York, in a balcony in front of the senate chamber, and in full view of an immense multitude occupying the street, the windows, and even roofs of the adjacent houses. The balcony formed a kind of open recess, with lofty columns supporting the roof. In the centre was a table with a covering of crimson velvet, upon which lay a superbly bound Bible on a crimson velvet cushion. This was all the paraphernalia for the august scene.

All eyes were fixed upon the balcony, when, at the appointed hour, Washington made his appearance, accompanied by various public functionaries, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. He was clad in a full suit of dark-brown cloth, of American manufacture, with a steel-hilted dress sword, white silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. His hair was dressed and powdered in the fashion of the day, and worn in a bag and solitaire.

His entrance on the balcony was hailed by universal shouts. He was evidently moved by this demonstration of public affection. Advancing to the front of the balcony, he laid his hand upon his heart, bowed several times, and then retreated to an arm-chair near the table. The populace appeared to understand that the scene had overcome him; and were hushed at once into profound silence.

After a few moments Washington rose and again came forward. John Adams, the Vice President, stood on his right; on his left the Chancellor of the State, Robert R. Livingston; some-

what in the rear were Roger Sherman, Alexander Hamilton, Generals Knox, St. Clair, the Baron Steuben and others.

The chancellor advanced to administer the oath prescribed by the constitution, and Mr. Otis, the secretary of the Senate, held up the Bible on its crimson cushion. The oath was read slowly and distinctly; Washington at the same time laying his hand on the open Bible. When it was concluded, he replied solemnly, "I swear—so help me God!" Mr. Otis would have raised the Bible to his lips, but he bowed down reverently and kissed it.

The chancellor now stepped forward, waved his hand and exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" At this moment a flag was displayed on the cupola of the hall; on which signal there was a general discharge of artillery on the battery. All the bells in the city rang out a joyful peal, and the multitude rent the air with acclamations.

Washington again bowed to the people and returned into the senate chamber, where he delivered, to both Houses of Congress, his inaugural address, characterized by his usual modesty, moderation and good sense, but uttered with a voice deep, slightly tremulous, and so low as to demand close attention in the listeners. After this he proceeded with the whole assemblage on foot to St. Paul's church, where prayers suited to the occasion were read by Dr. Prevost, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York, who had been appointed by the Senate one of the chaplains of Congress. So closed the ceremonies of the inauguration.

The whole day was one of sincere rejoicing, and in the evening there were brilliant illuminations and fireworks.

We have been accustomed to look to Washington's private

letters for the sentiments of his heart. Those written to several of his friends immediately after his inauguration, show how little he was excited by his official elevation. "I greatly fear," writes he, "that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant, and I might almost say undue praises, which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope unmerited censures."

Little was his modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands and endure throughout all generations.

In the volumes here concluded, we have endeavored to narrate faithfully the career of Washington from childhood, through his early surveying expeditions in the wilderness, his diplomatic mission to the French posts on the frontier, his campaigns in the French war, his arduous trials as commander-in-chief, throughout the Revolution, the noble simplicity of his life in retirement, until we have shown him elevated to the presidential chair, by no effort of his own, in a manner against his wishes, by the unanimous vote of a grateful country.

The plan of our work has necessarily carried us widely into the campaigns of the Revolution, even where Washington was not present in person; for his spirit pervaded and directed the whole, and a general knowledge of the whole is necessary to appreciate the sagacity, forecast, enduring fortitude, and compre-

hensive wisdom with which he conducted it. He himself has signified to one who aspired to write his biography, that any memoirs of his life distinct and unconnected with the history of the war, would be unsatisfactory. In treating of the Revolution, we have endeavored to do justice to what we consider its most striking characteristic; the greatness of the object and the scantiness of the means. We have endeavored to keep in view the prevailing poverty of resources, the scandalous neglects, the squalid miseries of all kinds, with which its champions had to contend in their expeditions through trackless wildernesses, or thinly peopled regions; beneath scorching suns or inclement skies; their wintry marches to be traced by bloody footprints on snow and ice; their desolate wintry encampments, rendered still more desolate by nakedness and famine. It was in the patience and fortitude with which these ills were sustained by a half-disciplined yeomanry, voluntary exiles from their homes, destitute of all the "pomp and circumstance" of war to excite them, and animated solely by their patriotism, that we read the noblest and most affecting characteristics of that great struggle for human rights. They do wrong to its moral grandeur, who seek by commonplace exaggeration, to give a melo-dramatic effect and false glare to its military operations, and to place its greatest triumphs in the conflicts of the field. Lafayette showed a true sense of the nature of the struggle, when Napoleon, accustomed to effect ambitious purposes by hundreds of thousands of troops, and tens of thousands of slain, sneered at the scanty armies of the American Revolution and its "boasted allies." "Sire," was the admirable and comprehensive reply, "it was the grandest of causes won by skirmishes of sentinels and outposts."

In regard to the character and conduct of Washington, we have endeavored to place his deeds in the clearest light, and left them to speak for themselves, generally avoiding comment or eulogium. We have quoted his own words and writings largely, to explain his feelings and motives, and give the true key to his policy; for never did man leave a more truthful mirror of his heart and mind, and a more thorough exponent of his conduct, than he has left in his copious correspondence. There his character is to be found in all its majestic simplicity, its massive grandeur, and quiet colossal strength. He was no hero of romance; there was nothing of romantic heroism in his nature. As a warrior, he was incapable of fear, but made no merit of defying danger. He fought for a cause, but not for personal renown. Gladly, when he had won the cause, he hung up his sword never again to take it down. Glory, that blatant word, which haunts some military minds like the bray of the trumpet, formed no part of his aspirations. To act justly was his instinct, to promote the public weal his constant effort, to deserve the "affections of good men" his ambition. With such qualifications for the pure exercise of sound judgment and comprehensive wisdom, he ascended the presidential chair.

There for the present we leave him. So far our work is complete, comprehending the whole military life of Washington, and his agency in public affairs, up to the formation of our constitution. How well we have executed it, we leave to the public to determine; hoping to find it, as heretofore, far more easily satisfied with the result of our labors than we are ourselves. Should the measure of health and good spirits, with which a kind Providence has blessed us beyond the usual term of literary labor, be still continued, we may go on, and in another volume, give the

presidential career and closing life of Washington. In the mean time, having found a resting-place in our task, we stay our hands, lay by our pen, and seek that relaxation and repose which gathering years require.

Sunnyside, 1857. W. I.

END OF VOL. IV.

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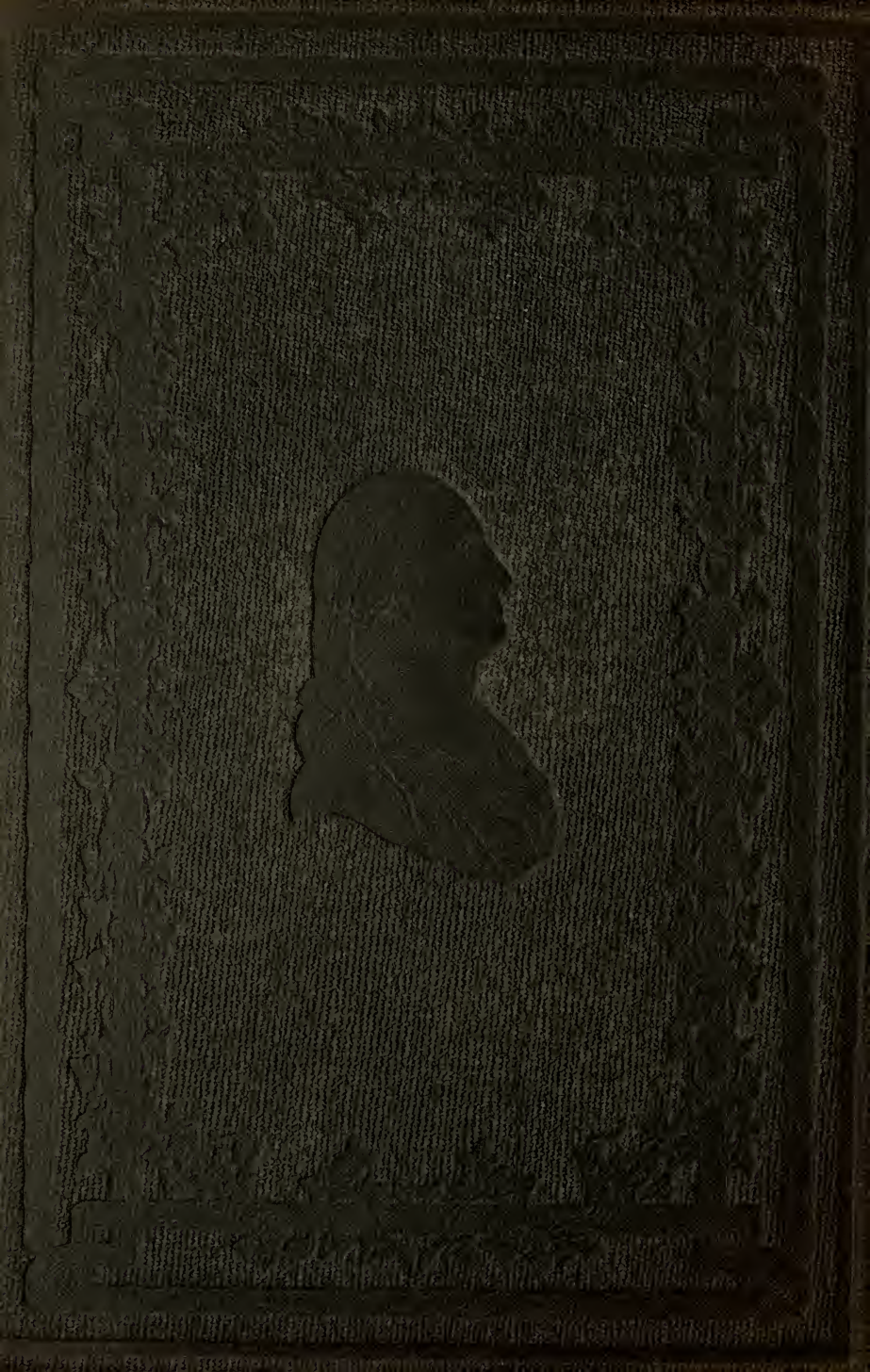
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